

Armed Forces Personnel and Support for Veterans – Primary Care

Plymouth Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee – March 2026

General Practice Veteran Accreditation Scheme

In Plymouth, all GP practices have signed up to the General Practice Veteran Accreditation Scheme.

The Veteran Friendly Accreditation Scheme is a programme run by the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) and NHS England. The Veteran Friendly GP Practice accreditation scheme supports practices to deliver the best possible care and treatment for veterans who have served in the UK Armed Forces and their families. Veteran friendly GP practices will have access to a range of veteran specific NHS services and resources. Accreditation sends an important signal to veteran patients and their families about inclusion and improves experiences and health outcomes for veterans.

Aims of the Scheme

- The scheme helps GP practices to identify, code and support their veteran patients, which is important as the healthcare needs of veterans can be different to the general population.
- Accredited practices appoint a clinical lead who receives training and support and receives an information pack to help increase their understanding of the health needs of veterans, and the services available to them.
- The information pack provides practices with a simple process for the easy identification of veteran patients, information on how to refer to specialist veteran healthcare services such as
 - Op COURAGE: The Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Service
 - Op RESTORE: The Veterans Physical Health and Wellbeing Service,
 - Op NOVA: Supporting Veterans in the Justice System, and
 - advice on how to secure priority access for veteran patients, subject to clinical need.

Social prescribing

In Plymouth – the GP practices employ an Armed Forces [Social Prescriber](#) covering the city. This service is available to all serving personnel, veterans and their families in Plymouth.

Social prescribing is a key component of [Universal Personalised Care](#). It is an approach that connects people to activities, groups, and services in their community

to meet the practical, social and emotional needs that affect their health and wellbeing.

In social prescribing, local agencies such as local charities, social care and health services refer people to a [social prescribing link worker](#). Social prescribing link workers give people time, focusing on 'what matters to me?' to coproduce a simple [personalised care and support plan](#), and support people to take control of their health and wellbeing.

Social prescribing link workers also support existing community groups to be accessible and sustainable, and help people to start new groups, working collaboratively with all local partners.

Social prescribing is an all-age, whole population approach that works particularly well for people who:

- have one or more long term conditions
- who need support with low level mental health issues
- who are lonely or isolated
- who have complex social needs which affect their wellbeing.

ENDS