

PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

Of service leavers with a long-term need, we know that over 90% of those needs will be mental health challenges. Our Psychological Wellbeing team offers free, confidential services to support Veterans and their families.

Our aim is to ensure that our beneficiaries:

- Have adapted to, and are managing effectively, the impact of their injury and/or illness
- Can always access well-coordinated advice, guidance, care and support
- Receive the right support to access the care pathway they need, where and when they need it.

INSIGHTS

- Over the last four years, our Hidden Wounds service has supported more than 2,144 people
- Research has revealed that one in four loved ones felt their own wellbeing and mental health was directly affected by a family member's situation
- We highlighted to the Defence Select Committee areas where Government action is required to ensure Veterans have access to appropriate mental health care
- Last year our Psychological Wellbeing Advisers delivered 12 workshops and courses, from Families Workshops to Compassionate Resilience courses and Anger Management workshops, to 138 participants.

“I’ve come from the dark side but can now see light at the end of the tunnel. My daughter wouldn’t cuddle me. She now gives me a cuddle and a kiss every night – that’s special, that’s what normal folk do.”

Nick Thomas, Veteran



**DISCOVER HOW NICK'S LIFE CHANGED WITH SUPPORT
FROM OUR PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING TEAM**

Nick Thomas served in the Army until an arm injury led to his medical discharge. However, it was the hidden wounds from his time in service that would vastly impact his life:

“I was suddenly on my own. My battalion in Northern Ireland were my friends and family. I didn’t know how to be a dad or partner, so hid behind drink.”

Frequently arrested, Nick’s life spiralled out of control until a judge told him to take action or face prison:

“At that point I sought medical help. I started a prescription but drank through it. There was something wrong with me, but I didn’t know what.”

Immersing himself in a new career, Nick was frequently away from home – leaving his wife, Kerry, to raise their children. After many years, Nick reached his limit and tried to take his own life.

Attempting to escape his demons, Nick and the family moved to Cornwall.

But he continued to struggle:

“I became aggressive. My wife didn’t know if I’d be a loving husband. My daughter was petrified of me. That’s not me. It tore me apart.”

Once again, Nick contemplated taking his own life – at this point, he realised he needed support and approached Help for Heroes.

Visiting the Charity’s Plymouth Recovery Centre, Nick received help from the Psychological Wellbeing team, and his family encountered a new support network through the Band of Sisters fellowship.

Now diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), both Nick and his family better understand his condition. Nick’s employers have also been made aware, which has enabled better support:

“As a family it’s amazing to see the change. Help for Heroes has not only looked after me, it has looked after my family.”

“At that point I sought medical help. I started a prescription but drank through it. There was something wrong with me, but I didn’t know what.”

Countless ex-Armed Forces families, like Nick’s, face the daily demons of hidden wounds. The number of those medically discharged due to mental health issues continues to increase. Your support will help families like Nick’s confront their demons and discover a happier and healthier way of life.