

## History of the Defence Medical Welfare Service (DMWS)



In this, our 75th year, we celebrate our rich and distinguished history. DMWS was formed from the Joint War Committee of the Order of St John and the British Red Cross in 1943.

In 2001 we became an independent charity delivering a highly responsive and professional welfare service to those who serve.

We provide practical and emotional support to frontline staff during times of physical or mental ill health to improve wellbeing and recovery, encourage a positive approach to treatment, reduce social isolation and promote independence.

Our welfare officers have deployed alongside the troops to every major conflict since WW2 including Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo and The Falklands to name a few, providing support to staff and patients alike with the aim to maintain military capability and morale.

Our knowledge and expertise rooted in operational experience placed us perfectly to extend our service to new beneficiaries in the veteran's community, the Police, the probation service and the NHS to continue our important mission to support those who put themselves in harm's way to protect the Nation.



### For 24-hour support

#### Contact referrals:

Tel: 0800 999 3697

Email: [referrals@dmws.org.uk](mailto:referrals@dmws.org.uk)

Website: [www.dmws.org.uk](http://www.dmws.org.uk)

### For more information

#### Contact general enquiry:

Tel: 01264 774 000

Email: [info@dmws.org.uk](mailto:info@dmws.org.uk)

Website: [www.dmws.org.uk](http://www.dmws.org.uk)

#### DMWS Headquarters

The Old Stables, Redenham Park, Andover,  
Hampshire, SP11 9AQ

Registered Charity:

1087210 (England, Wales) and SC045460 (Scotland)

## Defence Medical Welfare Service Information Leaflet



**Celebrating 75 years of  
caring for those who serve**



## What we do

For 75 years our charity DMWS has been providing an independent and confidential medical welfare service to frontline staff and their families when they are on a medical care pathway.

We understand that any hospital or medical treatment, whether planned or unplanned, can be stressful and can bring with it feelings of isolation, worry and anxiety, which may hamper recovery.

Our experienced welfare officers provide practical and emotional support to ensure that no family goes through the worry of injury or illness alone.

We work with patients when their medical needs are being met, but when other concerns or problems inhibit their wellbeing. Our aim is to encourage a positive approach to treatment, improve physical and mental health, promote independence and reduce social isolation.



## How we help

DMWS supports patients and their families from the Armed Forces community and Police by addressing issues that arise due to physical or mental ill health.

We tailor our support to the individual needs of the patient. Some of the ways we may help include:

- Offering a confidential and impartial listening ear
- Visiting patients in hospital and providing clinic and outpatient appointment support
- Helping to explain and resolve medical care issues
- Recognising issues that may be affecting a patient's wellbeing such as debt, housing, family breakdown
- Referrals to other agencies for specific support (e.g. housing, benefits, adaptations)
- Supporting the bereaved and terminally ill
- Resolving conflict and managing expectation

**“My family and I will always be grateful for the support given by DMWS in the dark days following my injury.”**

Simon Brown, DMWS Champion

Working with DMWS also provides advantages to linked organisations and health care providers such as liaising between the workplace, service providers and the patient, minimising the risk of complaints, saving money by reducing hospital length-of-stay and tackling delayed transfer of care issues, supporting family members and freeing up clinical staff.

24/7 service  
365 days a year  
Call: 0800 999 3697

## Case studies

The case studies below illustrate the difference we make to service users and health care providers:

**SERVING SOLDIER:** DMWS supported a soldier who was flown back from a conflict area with life threatening injuries. As the patient recovered he was visited daily, given assistance to address his concerns about his future in the military and was informed about the rehabilitation process.

**DEPENDANT:** Support to the spouse of a British soldier based overseas during a high-risk pregnancy. DMWS liaised between hospital staff and patient to explain cultural differences and managed expectations in order to reduce any misunderstanding and potential conflict.

**VETERAN:** Support to a 92 year old veteran with dementia who was in hospital with unexplained hip pain. By spending time speaking with the veteran, the DMWS welfare officer established he had sustained an injury during the war. This insight helped with getting an accurate diagnosis.

**POLICE OFFICER:** After the officer sustained life changing injuries, support was given to him and his family. Practical help on house adaptation meant the officer was able to return home earlier than he anticipated, which accelerated his recovery and also led to an earlier return to work.

