

Gateway 14645

12 August 2010

CONTINUING CARE FOR VETERANS

NOTE TO LIMB CENTRE MANAGERS, PROVIDERS, SERVICE PERSONNEL & VETERANS AGENCY, AND VETERANS ORGANISATIONS

The purpose of this note is to remind those involved in the care of veterans that:-

- **As long as the clinical need remains, the commitments contained in the Command Paper, ‘The Nation’s Commitment: Cross-Government Support to our Armed Forces, their Families and Veterans’ and the Department of Health Written Ministerial Statement on the Medical Care of veterans of 11th January 2010, that all veterans who have lost a limb while serving in the Armed Forces, where clinically appropriate should receive prostheses to an equivalent standard to that provided by Defence Medical Services**
- **Subject to the clinical needs of others, Veterans should receive priority treatment for referrals where the condition relates to their time serving with the Armed forces.**
- **Provision of services will need to reflect a full assessment of the health needs of an individual including, where appropriate, their mental health needs**

Action

To ensure this note is brought to the attention of those involved in providing prosthetic services to Veterans.

Background

In accordance with the commitment given in the Command Paper, '[The Nation's Commitment: Cross-Government Support to our Armed forces, their Families and Veterans](#)'¹, the Ministry of Defence, the Department of Health and the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency are working together to ensure that service leavers who have lost a limb while serving will, where clinically appropriate, be entitled to receive from the NHS and equivalent standard of prosthetic limb to those provided by Defence Medical Services. This undertaking was extended in the [Department of Health written Ministerial statement on the medical care of veterans dated 11th January 2010](#), to apply to all veterans who have lost a limb while serving, where clinically appropriate.

The revised [NHS Operating Framework](#) 2010/11, published 21 June 2010, highlights the need to ensure that military veterans receive appropriate treatment. This builds upon the recommendations in the NHS OF for 2009/10, that PCTs and providers, when commissioning services, should take account of military personnel, their families and veterans in their area.

Further details of the arrangements for the medical care of the Armed forces, their Families and Veterans can be found in the guidance [letter dated 20th June 2008 Gateway 10070](#) sent by the Department of Health to Chief Executives of Strategic health Authorities. Annex B of the letter provides specific guidance in relation to the provision of prostheses for ex-Service personnel.

Health professional should remain aware of the possible mental health needs of veterans when assessing their physical health requirements.

¹ Prosthetic Limb Provision – the standard of prosthetic limb provision to injured personnel by Defence Medical Services will as a minimum be matched post-Service by the NHS in Great Britain