

News story: MOD launches first ever Defence Domestic Abuse Strategy

The strategy builds on existing work by the military in this area, such as providing specialist training to welfare staff, and will include the launch of a campaign to raise awareness across the Armed Forces and enhancing support for civilian staff.

A national audit of current available support will also be undertaken, to ensure that help will be on hand for those suffering abuse, wherever they are.

The No Defence for Abuse Strategy aims to partner with specialist organisations to help them understand the unique needs of the service community. It will also work to create a culture of safety and support for those experiencing domestic abuse and their children, taking steps to break down the invisible wall that can deter victims from asking for help.

While there is no evidence to suggest that domestic abuse is any more prolific within the service community than in the general population, UK figures show that at least one in four women and one in six men will be affected by domestic abuse in their lifetime.

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Tobias Ellwood said:

Domestic abuse has no place within our communities, and this strategy highlights our commitment to creating an environment where abusive behaviour is simply not tolerated.

We have already made progress by ensuring our welfare staff receive specialist training, and by producing a domestic abuse policy. But there is more that can be done.

Through this strategy, we will work to ensure that the right support is available to those who need it.

The delivery of the new five-year strategy will be focused on three key areas:

- Prevention – raising awareness of domestic abuse and what it entails, encouraging a culture of openness and taking steps to better identify those most at risk
- Intervention – enabling appropriate responses through specialist training, ensuring that MOD policies do not serve as barriers to those seeking help, and providing consistent support

- Partnering – working with external organisations and expert bodies to provide services suitably tailored to the Armed Forces, and learning from best practice

As well as raising awareness and providing support to those affected, the No Defence For Abuse Strategy will work to provide rehabilitation options for perpetrators, and engage with specialist agencies to prevent future abuse. As an employer, the Ministry of Defence will continue to support the Employers' Initiative on Domestic Abuse, and contribute to Government-wide work in developing the first Domestic Violence and Abuse Bill.

For more information and guidance on domestic abuse and the support available to the armed forces community:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/domestic-abuse-guidance-and-support-for-the-armed-forces-community>

If you, or someone you know, is experiencing domestic abuse and need help or support you can find support through your welfare service, via the Police or from specialist organisations, via the National Domestic Violence Helpline, who exist to support anyone experiencing domestic abuse.

If you need help in an emergency, if you fear for your safety or that of someone else you should always call 999 or the relevant emergency number if overseas.

National Domestic Violence Helpline

www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk – 0808 2000 247

The Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline, run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge, is a national service for women experiencing domestic violence, their family, friends, colleagues and others calling on their behalf.

For advice in Northern Ireland: 0800 917 1414, Scotland: 0800 027 1234 or Wales: 0808 80 10 800