

Disabled and vulnerable veterans employment needs

PoppyScotland's groundbreaking research into the employment needs of disabled and vulnerable veterans indicates that ex-Service men and women face significant barriers in their attempts to find suitable employment on exiting the Forces. Those struggling with physical and mental illness could be considered to be doubly disadvantaged.

The study, believed to be the first of its kind in the UK, includes a survey of ex-Service personnel in Scotland and the rest of Britain. Respondents reported a serious shortage of specialist employment advice for Service leavers and a lack of support on how to claim benefits. In addition, the survey showed that, compared to their English and Welsh counterparts, veterans living in Scotland are:

- 3% more likely to struggle with alcohol problems
- 5% more likely to have a criminal record
- 5% more likely to have financial problems
- 8% more likely to have mental health problems
- 10% more likely to become homeless

Overall, the study reveals that a staggering 28,000 ex- Servicemen and women across Scotland are known to be out of work and that veterans find it particularly challenging to find and sustain employment in an environment which fails to provide the support and structure to which they are accustomed in the Forces.

The report contains a number of recommendations to improve employability services for vulnerable and disabled veterans, providing mainstream and veterans' organisations with the knowledge they require to respond more effectively to the needs of this deserving group.

Norma Hurley, a director of Blake Stevenson who carried out the study on behalf of PoppyScotland, said: "The research draws attention to the need for better support from the MOD to help sailors, soldiers and airmen re-adjust to civilian life. We also found that employment support agencies need to be much more aware of the complexity of veterans' experiences and abilities so that they can offer appropriate services which help veterans to find and keep employment."

The full report is available online at www.poppyscotland.org.uk

PoppyScotland is grateful to The MacRobert Trust who funded the study.



Lady Hat's Poppy
Factory Framing Shop