

Hello,

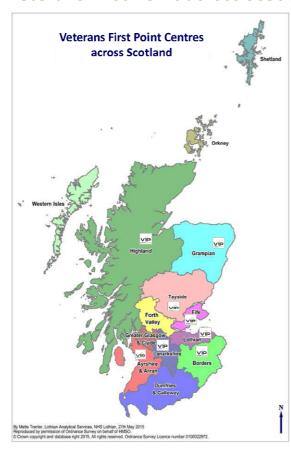
Welcome to the latest Veterans First Point Scotland Team Newsletter!

We thought it would be useful to update you on the progress we continue to make working with you, our Partners, for the Veteran Community. The Veterans First Point network has continued to grow and develop with all eight centres now fully operational.

At our 2nd Annual Veterans First Point Scotland Conference at Edinburgh Napier University Craiglockhart Campus, we launched our Veterans First Point website, http://www.veteransfirstpoint.org.uk/ where we envision Veterans and their families finding their closest centre to them or to find a helpful link which will help them move forward.

We hope you find this newsletter helpful, and please get in touch to discuss any aspect of the programme or to share any further ideas you may have to support veterans, their families and communities across Scotland.

Veterans First Point across Scotland



Ayrshire & Arran – Based at 12-14 Bridgegate, Irvine KA12 8BO

Borders – Based in The Hive, Low Buckholmside, Galashiels, TD1 1RT.

Fife – Based in Cardenden Health Centre with Outreach locations at Bruce Heights Flats, Broomhead Drive, Dunfermline KY12 9AE and Kirkcaldy East, 2 Park Road, Kirkcaldy KY1 3EL.

Grampian – Based in Royal Cornhill Hospital in Fyvie Ward, Aberdeen, AB25 2ZH and drop in locations at Elgin Resource Centre weekly on a Tuesday and Rosemount Community Centre every two weeks on a Tuesday.

Highland – Based in PoppyScotland, Strothers Lane, Inverness IV1 1LR.

Lanarkshire – Based in Houldsworth Centre, Kenilworth Avenue, Wishaw ML2 7LP with Access Point locations at the Tolbooth, Main Street, Lanark ML11 7EX on Tuesdays and in the Library of Houldsworth Centre on Fridays.

Lothian – Based at Argyle House, 3 Lady Lawson, Floor K, Edinburgh EH3 9DR

Tayside – Based in 21b City Quays, Camperdown Street, Dundee DD1 3JA

Ayrshire & Arran



Ayrshire & Arran staff completed their induction training in January of this year and opened its doors on the 17th of February 2017. They celebrated their official launch on the 9th of March 2017. This was a successful event with over 80 people attending, including the Lord Lieutenant, John Duncan, Provosts of East and North Ayrshire and the Depute Provost of South Ayrshire. The launch was covered by local press, including a piece on West Fm Radio.

The event included a poignant poem, "Civvy Street" written and performed by local poet and Community Psychiatric Nurse, Tracy Harvey, who wrote the poem especially for the launch. Attendees were also treated to a wonderful performance by Trooper Parks from the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards with the patriotic sounds of his bagpipes.

In the first 4 weeks that V1P A&A opened, it accepted 47 referrals, almost half of which were walk -n self referrals. The A & A team has put this down to being very centrally located within Bridgegate, a main shopping street within Irvine town centre.

For further developments in Ayrshire & Arran, please contact V1P Ayrshire and Arran at 01294 310400 or aa-uhb.veteransfirstpoint@nhs.net

Borders



It is encouraging to see the number of referrals growing weekly at V1P Borders. GP referrals are increasing but the main source is still self-referral. The Team is continuing to provide a regular evening drop-in giving service users the opportunity to have a chat and overcome social isolation. Some of the service users have made contact with soldiers who they were in the same Regiment with many years ago and have lost touch. What a coincidence as none of them are originally from the Scottish Borders!

At the evening drop ins, we have veteran volunteers rustling up cordon bleu masterpieces (well, spag bol and sausage & mash). But they are delicious and much appreciated by the veterans (and hungry staff!). One of the very kind service users has volunteered to make a cheesecake for the next session, as there was general dissent at the last drop-in that there was no pudding, and the Clinical Lead got the blame for this!!

We have had the pleasure of an Occupational Therapy student on placement from January 2017 and who finishes in May 2017. She has been a pleasure to work with and has supported us both through supporting service-users and helping us with the evening drops ins. We will miss her greatly and wish her well for the future.

The team is now well established in our new premises in Galashiels. We are in the process of creating a new resource room for the Veterans to use. We have advertised locally for donations and these have started coming in. So far we have had quite a few books, magazines and playing cards. We are on the hunt for other activities such as mindfulness colouring books, draughts and dominos. We have had a request from one of our Veterans if we can source a chess set, so it might be a look round the charity shops at the weekend. A pool table is also in quite high demand, but getting one of those will take a bit more work. Our newest Veteran volunteer has very kindly donated two computers and printer for our resource room. He is also a whiz on computers so is setting them up for us, so that Veterans will be able to write CVs and search the internet for jobs, courses and activities.

For further developments in Borders, please contact V1P Borders at 01896 668551 or V1P@Borders.scot.nhs.uk



The first evening drop-in with team members and Veterans at the new V1P Borders' premises - The Hive, Galashiels

Fife



Veterans First Point Fife host community drop in centres in Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline. The Team of peer support workers (PSW) and clinicians offer one-one appointments in numerous locations across Fife and continue to review options / demand for a community drop in in Northeast Fife.

The administrative centre is located in Cardenden. We welcomed our new PSW Pete McIntyre in February 2017 and Emma Maitland is making a gradual return from maternity leave, so we are nearly back to our staffing complement. Dean McMinn continues to offer Outcomes Star training across the network and Teresa Bramley assists Lothian in attending HARDFACTS reviews for veterans from across Scotland in addition to their day jobs!

For further developments in Fife, please contact V1P Fife at 01592 723844 or Fife-UHB.VeteransFirstPoint@nhs.net

Grampian



V1P Grampian saw its first veteran in December and the client list has continued to grow and we now have over 30 veterans in contact with the service. The main focus for veteran interface continues to be in Moray where we work in closely with V1P Highland who have a significant client base there because of the proximity to their area: it is anticipated these veterans will migrate to the Grampian service over time.

Staffing remains an issue with the third Peer Support Worker post and Clinical Lead vacant because of longer term funding uncertainties. On a positive note, Lori - Beth Thom has recently joined the team from the MOD as a Nurse Therapist based in Elgin. Building on our close relationship with NHS Highland, it is planned that Grampian will undertake certain Highland administrative functions from the office base at Royal Cornhill Hospital in Aberdeen. This will be underpinned by a Service Level Agreement between the two Boards.

For further developments in Grampian, please contact V1P Grampian 01224 557695 or nhsg.v1pgrampian@nhs.net

Highland



The Veterans First Point Highland partnership with Poppyscotland Inverness is now travelling forward to its first anniversary and the end of an exciting year. Since the doors opened in June 2016 the service with veterans has steadily grown.

We are continuing to journey north to East Sutherland to take part in regular veteran peer group activities in Helmsdale. The focus of Veterans First Point South in Lochaber is quite different, and there is scope for the present 1:1 visits to develop into peer group activities when the timing is right

New partnership activities take the service east with Veterans First Point Grampian aim to improve the service for veterans in the Morayshire area. Invitations for V1P partnership activities in new rural areas, Badenoch and Strathspey, the Western Isles and Orkney and West Sutherland are being considered.

This is also the beginning of the V1PH project evaluation phase alongside the formal service evaluation since the informal ideas and suggestions of veterans matter immensely. Ideas might spring from conversations that happen after a burst of exercise, a walk, a brew or in a change of location. Physical activity and getting out is good for mental health, and is as a healthy for individual veterans as it is for the service overall.

April 2017 also sees the launch of the New Mental Health Strategy for Scotland, which supports local efforts to support veterans and their families locally and through "Renewing our Commitments" (Feb 2016) as part of the Armed Forces Covenant. Veterans First Point Highland will be working closely with Veterans Partners and supporters in Highland to turn strategy into action.

For further developments in Highlands, please contact V1P Highland at Poppyscotland on 01463 710300 or nhshighland.veteransfirstpoint@nhs.net

Lanarkshire



V1P Lanarkshire have had a busy start to 2017 celebrating their 6 month milestone of being operational at the end of February. The team also reached a further milestone in March this year when our 100^{th} Veteran registered with us. As part of our continuing effort to develop our service in response to the needs of the Veterans within our community, we developed a 6-month review survey which we sent to all of our service-users (Veteran, professional, and civilian) and we are now beginning to collate the results.

In other news, V1P Lanarkshire's own peer support worker, Deborah Burns, was nominated and shortlisted for the Daily Record Forces Hero 2017. We are very proud to have Deborah as part of our V1P team and we wish her every success in the upcoming awards. The team also had the pleasure of being invited to the

Veterans Roadshow in March, a fantastic event organised by Veterans Scotland at which Deborah was invited to speak. Partnership working within Lanarkshire for the co-ordinated support of all our veterans is a top priority for V1P Lanarkshire.

More changes; V1P Lanarkshire advertised the change of our Access Point earlier this year and we formally moved from the Hamilton venue to the Toll Booth in the Main Street in Lanark on Tuesdays from 12 – 3pm in March. This move took place following months of planning in order to increase accessibility to the service for Veterans in the more rural outskirts of South Lanarkshire who otherwise might find it very difficult to attend. We hope the new Access Point will be a great success! We also hold a weekly Access Point in the library at the Houldsworth Centre, in Wishaw on Fridays from 11am – 2pm and this primarily serves Veterans in Central and North Lanarkshire.

Last but certainly not least, V1P Lanarkshire are very excited to announce two new volunteers to our service; Graham Mays, a retired RAF veteran with 13+ years' service primarily as a communications engineer working on the Defence Communications Network, and Captain Alex Shannon, a commissioned officer in the 32 Signal Regiment with a previous 26 years in the Royal Scots and then 1SCOTS including 9 operational tours. Our volunteers will support V1P by co-facilitating our weekly Access Points in Lanark and Wishaw, by promoting the service throughout Lanarkshire, and by representing V1P at relevant events. We are delighted to welcome them aboard! For further developments in Lanarkshire, please contact V1P Lanarkshire at 0300 303 3051 or Lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk

Lothian

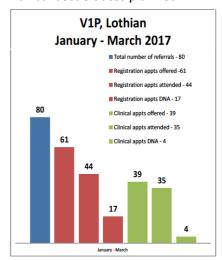


Another busy quarter for V1P Lothian is reflected in the graph below.. We have noted a recent increase in GP referrals as reflected in the service review work done by Sara Hennah (PSW) for her MSc in Military and Veterans Families Studies with Anglia Ruskin University. Our Peer led Supporters Group continues to offer an opportunity for family members to share their experience of living with those affected by mental ill health and particularly trauma. Other Peer led activities include fly-fishing trips and our 'Outdoor Drop-In' season begins soon with barbecue dates planned over The Summer.

Partnership highlights include the continuation with SACRO of our prison inreach, and planning with The Royal Caledonian Educational Trust for some books about mental health aimed at children and families of ex-forces personnel.

Finally, we wish Dr Ian Sorhagen all the best in his new position at Combat Stress following his time with us on an Honorary Contract as a Psychological Therapist.

For further developments in Lothian, please contact V1P Lothian at 0131 220 9920 or enquiries@veteransfirstpoint.org.uk



Tayside



V1P Tayside service has been fully operational for over 1½ years and in that time we have provided support to some 150 veterans and their family members. Although the Tayforth Veterans Project wound down, the legacy of the charity continues. Whether seeking support with housing, employment or financial issues, or the assessment and treatment of mental health issues, we are encouraged that our largest source of referral is from veterans themselves and we hope this is a sign that the service is both accessible and credible to those who use it.

It is an exciting time for our service and although we have a number of developments in the pipeline, our main focus currently is on reviewing the work of the service to date and discussing the sustainability of the service in the longer term.

For further developments in this area, please contact V1P Tayside at 01382 206207 or vfp.tayside@nhs.net

Evaluation Update

Queen Margaret University were commissioned to conduct the evaluation of Veterans First Point Scotland. A standard data set is used in all centres to measure quantifiable improvements of veterans and their families across three domains:

- · Physical health
- Mental health
- Financial health

A number of standardised assessments are used and are being collated for each client along with standardised demographic and service information. The evaluation of Veterans First Point Scotland is ongoing at present. A summary of the demographic data which has been gathered, entered into database and checked is provided below.

To date we have entered and checked 202 datasets from 5 services:

Lothian 107 cases
Fife 23 case
Borders 21 cases
Lanarkshire 5 cases
Tayside 46 cases

Further data will be gathered from all these sites and from the most recent services in Grampian, Highlands and Ayrshire and Arran. This snapshot of the data has allowed a descriptive summary of veterans who are accessing the service. Going forward, the next stage is focusing on collating and analysing the outcome data which will make it possible to measure the impact of interventions and in turn the outcomes for veterans.

Interim Analysis of Demographic Data (number = 202 clients) - a snapshot of the data we have available to analyse at the present time.

Referrals - It is reassuring to see that more than a third of referrals were self referral in line with the one of the three key principles of V1P – **Accessibility**.

Of the 34 % veterans who self referred - 36% were encouraged to self refer by statutory health/social care services, 7% by prison services, 17% having seen publicity and a further 17% were encouraged to self refer by family or friends. Veterans UK (13%) and Forces Charities (10%) have also supported individuals to refer themselves: A succinct demonstration of the further two principles – **Coordination and Creditability.**

Who is Most Likely to Access V1P Scotland?

Veterans accessing V1P Scotland are Male (92%) and would define themselves as White Scottish (75%). Three quarters of the veterans accessing V1P Scotland are between the ages of 30 and 54years. A fifth are aged between 45 and 49 years. Only 7% are aged less than 30 and only 6% are aged over 65 years.

The majority 94% have served in regular forces, and service has been predominately in the army (90%) with RAF service representing 5% and the Navy 3%. Just over half of veterans, 53%, accessing V1P Scotland were at Private rank (or equivalent) on discharge; 36% were at a rank equivalent to JNCO and 11% SNCO or Warrant Officer.

The average length of service is just over 10 years with a range from 3 months to 25 years with methods of Discharge being wide ranging.

Social Situation of those accessing V1P Scotland Services

The majority describe themselves as married or in a civil partnership (34%) or co-habiting with a partner (11%). The majority of veterans accessing services have children (77%). Most are living with family members 57% (Partner/spouse 29%; Partner/spouse and children 19%; Relatives 9%) while almost a fifth of those accessing V1P services are living alone (19%). A small proportion (3%) but of particular concern are those who are living with friends; are currently homeless or reside in homes of multiple occupancy. Another concerning factor is that when asked, 14% of those accessing V1P Scotland services consider their current living situation unstable. Even greater proportions (29%) have experienced homelessness at sometime in their lives.

The majority, 36% of V1P veterans have addresses in areas of the highest levels of social deprivation in Scotland (as classified by Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) with only 8% living in address in areas of the least social deprivation.

Education and Employment Histories of those accessing V1P Scotland Services

Almost half of the veterans accessing support have educational attainment of school qualifications (46%), while 23% didn't complete school and have no qualifications. Further educational qualifications have been attained by 31% of the veterans; 15% have some form of college education; 10% have a vocational qualification; 5% a Bachelor degree and 1% a Masters degree.

The majority (95%) have some experience of employment outwith the military employ, over 95%, however at the time of accessing services high proportions are unemployed (31%) or currently signed off on sickness absence (17%). When asked, more than half (55%) of veterans accessing support through V1P Scotland Services stated an employment or education goal. Of those with employment or education goals, for 81%, their goal was to obtain or maintain paid employment; 11% their goal was for education or training and 8% their goal was to obtain voluntary work.

What problems do Veterans identify when first accessing V1P Scotland Services?

The initial self reported problems that veterans report when first accessing the service are:

- Anxiety and depression most frequently reported as moderate (31% of veterans), severe (20%) or disabling issues (16%).
- "Experience of pain" and "engaging in usual everyday activities" reported as moderate, severe or disabling issues for more than half of the Veterans accessing V1P Scotland.
- Pain causes moderate issues for 23% of veterans accessing V1P Scotland, 29% experience severe problems and 5% report pain resulting in them being unable to participate in daily life.
- When asked about engaging in usual everyday activities 24% of veterans reported moderate difficulties, 28% report severe difficulties and 5% are unable to engage in usual activities due to the problems they experience.

Data regarding outcomes is currently being collated and analysed.

Veterans First Point Scotland Updates

National Conference

Veterans First Point Scotland is very excited to host The 2nd Annual Veterans First Point Scotland Conference with Colonel (Retd) Martin Gibson graciously agreeing to be our Chairman once again. Our guest speakers include Professor Chris Freeman from NHS Lothian, Gregory A. Hinrichsen, Ph.D. from the US of A, Dr Jaye Balakrishna from DPHS, Dr Neil Kitchiner from NHS Wales and Dr Sharon Stevelink from King's Centre for Military Health Research.

Aa pre-conference workshop was held on Wednesday, 10th May 2017 at the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, Nicolson Street, on the topic of supporting Veterans in the USA - "Treatment of Depression in Military Service Veterans" presented by Gregory A. Hinrichsen, Ph.D.

The Great Hall in Edinburgh Castle was the venue for a pre-conference evening reception on Wednesday, 10th May 2017. The Governor of Edinburgh Castle, Major General M L Riddell-Webster CBE DSO hosted the event for invited guests and conference presenters.

National Network Meetings

The latest Veterans First Point Network Meeting was held on Monday, 6th February at Walpole Hall in Edinburgh. The business element of our meeting was followed by two of our Network team members, Deborah Burns and Don Campbell speaking of their experiences in the military and their transition back to civilians. This was both informative and enjoyable for all present. Joe Connolly from Venture Trust Scotland presented on the Positive Futures course available for Veterans.

Tests of Concept

Criminal Justice Social Work Pilot

Between January 2016 and January 2017, VIP Lothian was involved in Test of Concept with Criminal Justice Social Work. It was hoped that Criminal Justice Social Workers would identify veterans earlier in the criminal justice process and work closely with V1P Lothian to undertake a needs based assessment. Referrals from CJSW and social work generally have increased compared to previous years and we are developing closer relationships with our colleagues and continuing to raise the profile of V1P for the benefit of Veterans.

Individual Placement Support (IPS) Pilot

Lisa Mulvaney is V1P Lothian's Occupational Therapist who specialises in IPS. It was audited by an external team with a result of Good Fidelity which is an exceptional outcome for a first year project. Funding has been extended for another year to continue to develop the service since it has shown great results for eighteen Veterans achieving and sustaining employment. To spread the good word of IPS and its positive benefits for our Lothian Veterans and V1P, we would like to share one of our Veteran experiences of IPS and how it helped him with his recovery.

"When I first started to see the OT, I was in a very low place. I had very little confidence and I wasn't sure how I should start the process of finding work. I was unsure what my strengths were, and I believed my weaknesses outnumbered them. My OT identified both my strengths and weaknesses and we were able to concentrate on more appropriate areas in which to start the job search. To be honest, some of the fields of employment were in places I would never have looked at.

We sent out several CV's. At first I was a bit despondent as I did not receive any replies or responses, but my OT was on hand to put my mind at ease and encourage me to keep going. When I did get offered interviews, we decided that we would be honest and tell potential future employers of my mental health issues. This was extremely beneficial as I didn't have to explain it at interview or worry how they were going to react when they did find out. They were willing to see me knowing this information, which in itself, was a boost to my confidence.

I successfully got a job which I really enjoy and I feel fortunate that my employers understood and are supportive, it felt like a breath of fresh air. I have now adjusted to the shift patterns and working weekends. I feel my wellbeing is so much better now. I walk to work; I meet lots of new people and have the chance to have polite conversation. I am aware however, that I have a responsibility to inform my employer if any difficulties arise and that I need to keep being honest with them. I no longer see honesty as a weakness. I am now at a level that I am happy to be at. I do not feel like I am under any kind of pressure to climb the corporate ladder. I was worried about coming off benefits as that was a life I had known for the past few years. It was a leap of faith... that was successful. My life is better in more different ways."

Lisa would like to continue helping Veterans gain employment to support their individual needs and preferences. She will continue to promote the benefits of IPS in the Veteran's community and work towards achieving the highest audit rating level.

Partnership Working

As well as the many informal contacts we have with our Partners, we regularly engage in formal events to highlight the availability of V1P services both in the Veteran's Community and in the wider Health arena. Sharon Fegan recently attended a Scottish Resources Committee (SSAFA) Meeting to update members on the progress of V1P. Sharon and Linda Irvine presented at The Mental Health and Veterans Cross Party Groups. On Saturday, 4th March 2017, Sharon co-presented with Scottish Veterans Commissioner Eric Fraser at The Student Occupational Therapy Links Conference at QMU on "Working with Veterans and transition".

Research

Charlie Allanson-Oddy in his presentation on the role and value of Veteran Peer Support Workers, shared Bronagh Weir's study at King's College London Conference on Thursday, 16th March 2017 and it was very well received. Bronagh's study, which was based in the Lothian Team and supported by them, identified four overarching themes of the role of the Peer Support Worker: as positive first impression, understanding professional friend, helpful and supportive connector, and an open door. Veteran clients felt welcome, reassured and understood; a credible sense of military connectedness; friendship and inspiration to help others; gratitude for getting the support they needed; and confident they could re-engage if needed. This reflects very positively on the role and potential of the Peer Worker Roles.

Building our Capacity

V1P Borders is currently hosting a Post Graduate Occupational Therapy Student from Queen Margaret University who has been an asset to the team and in return for her positive contribution have been educating her in all things "Veteran". We continue to develop our pathways for students and are engaging with Glasgow Caledonian University in relation to Counselling Psychology Students.

V1P Scotland: Creating a culture of research, future funding and training programme for 2017

The V1P Team Leads continue to meet regularly with Linda Irvine, Strategic Lead for VIP Scotland to explore developing a cohesive research programme and training strategy as well as agreeing priorities for future funding.

Training

Induction Training

All V1P teams have completed Induction Training and this continue to be available in for all new team members. Please contact V1PS to arrange suitable dates.



V1P Scotland: Who we are

- ❖ Dr Lucy Abraham Consultant Clinical Psychologist / Veterans First Point Scotland Service Lead − on Maternity Leave until 13th June 2017 (1.00 WTE)
- ❖ Ann-Marie Corkerton Project Support Officer (1.00 WTE)
- ❖ Sharon Fegan Consultant Psychological Therapist (0.6 WTE)
- ❖ Linda Irvine Strategic Lead (0.1 WTE
- Dr Alex Quinn Psychiatrist (0.1 WTE)

You can contact us at:

Phone: 0131 221 7090 Website: <u>www.veteransfirstpoint.org.uk</u>

Email: V1P.Scotland@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

V1P Network Contact List

| V1P Ayrshire & Arran | Phone: 01294 310400 |
|----------------------|---|
| | Email: aa-uhb.veteransfirstpoint@nhs.net |
| V1P Borders | Phone: 01896 668551 |
| | Email: V1P@Borders.scot.nhs.uk |
| V1P Fife | Phone: 01383 565393 |
| | Email: Fife-UHB.VeteransFirstPoint@nhs.net |
| V1P Grampian | Phone: 01224 557695 |
| | Email: nhsg.v1pgrampian@nhs.net |
| V1P Highland | Phone: PoppyScotland on 01463 710300 |
| | Email: nhshighland.veteransfirstpoint@nhs.net |
| V1P Lanarkshire | Phone: 0300 303 3051 |
| | Email: LanarkshireV1P@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk |
| V1P Lothian | Phone: 0131 220 9920 |
| | Email: enquiries@veteransfirstpoint.org.uk |
| V1P Scotland | Phone: 0131 221 7090 |
| | Email: V1P.Scotland@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk |
| V1P Tayside | Phone: 01382 206207 |
| | Email: vfp.tayside@nhs.net |