

FOI 034/2026 Response

I am undertaking a public health review of the UK Ministry of Defence looking at early psychological support and access to talking therapy pathways for serving Armed Forces personnel.

I am particularly interested in how NHS Talking Therapies and related psychological support services are accessed by serving military personnel, and how this interacts with wider Defence, NHS and third sector support.

Please provide the following recorded information for your MHFT

For the purposes of this request, “serving military personnel” means **currently serving UK Armed Forces personnel, including regular personnel and reservists**, where this status is recorded or identifiable in the data you hold.

Please provide information for the following periods where held:

- 2023/24 financial year
- 2024/25 financial year
- 2025/26 financial year

If the current ICB was created through merger or boundary change, please provide the information held for the predecessor footprint where available.

*** Please note:

- As of the 1st July 2025, Forward Thinking Birmingham (service previously hosted by Birmingham Women’s and Children's Trust) was transferred to Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Trust and includes the transfer of Children and Young People (CYP) Talking Therapies service provided by Living Well Consortium.
- For information regarding Children and Young People (CYP) Talking Therapies service provided by Living Well Consortium, please redirect to: Patrick Kwesiga Patrick.Kwesiga@livingwellconsortium.com
- The below response is in relation to the Trust’s Birmingham Healthy Minds (BHM) Service – for further details regarding the service please refer to the following link: [Birmingham Healthy Minds - Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust](#)

NHS Talking Therapies provision

Please provide:

- a. The name of the NHS Talking Therapies service or services commissioned for your population
Birmingham Healthy Minds (BHM).
- b. The provider organisation or organisations delivering these services
Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust.
- c. What services are delivered
NICE recommended talking therapies for common mental health problems.
- d. Whether the service(s) accepts self-referrals
yes, self-referrals are accepted.
- e. Whether the service accepts referrals from NHS GPs only, or from other routes such as Defence Medical Services GP practices
Self-referrals, GP referrals and professional referrals are accepted for patients with a Birmingham GP.
- f. Any eligibility criteria that apply to serving Armed Forces personnel
Patients should have a Birmingham GP and meet the referral criteria for the Service.

Access by serving Armed Forces personnel

Please confirm whether serving military personnel can access your ICB-commissioned NHS Talking Therapies service if they are:

a. Registered with an NHS GP in your area

Yes.

b. Temporarily posted or resident in your area

Only if they are registered with a Birmingham GP, even on a temporary basis.

c. A reservist registered with an NHS GP in your area.

As noted above, yes, if registered with a Birmingham GP.

d. Under Defence Medical Services primary care rather than NHS primary care

No

If any of these groups are excluded, redirected or subject to a different access route, please provide the recorded policy, guidance or pathway document that explains this.

BHM is commissioned to provide NHS Talking Therapies (NHS TT) to patients who are registered to a Birmingham GP.

Patients who are registered with a GP outside of Birmingham are directed to their local NHS TT Service.

Activity data

For each requested year, please provide the following information where held:

- a. Total number of referrals to each NHS Talking Therapies by service(s) offered if multiple are offered.
- b. Number of referrals where the person was identified as serving Armed Forces personnel (if collected).
- c. Number of serving Armed Forces personnel accepted for assessment.
- d. Number of serving Armed Forces personnel entering treatment.

- e. Number of serving Armed Forces personnel completing treatment.
- f. Average or median wait from referral to assessment.
- g. Average or median wait from referral to first treatment appointment.
- h. Recovery, reliable improvement or other outcome measures for serving Armed Forces personnel, where separately recorded.
- i. DNA/non-attendance rates for serving Armed Forces personnel, where separately recorded.

If serving military status is not recorded or cannot be separately identified, please state this clearly.

I am not requesting any patient-identifiable information. Aggregated data is sufficient, and I am content for small numbers to be suppressed where required.

Please refer to the table below and note the following:

- For the purposes of this request, “serving military personnel” means currently serving UK Armed Forces personnel, including regular personnel and reservists, where this status is recorded or identifiable in the data you hold.
- We do not capture in a reportable way whether an individual is serving or ex-serving military personnel.
- The figures below are based on both current serving and ex-serving military personnel.

Question	Number of referrals		
	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
a). Total number of referrals to each NHS Talking Therapies by service(s) offered if multiple are offered.	22564	22744	23028
b). Number of referrals where the person was identified as Armed Forces personnel (if collected).	37	30	48
c). Number of Armed Forces personnel accepted for assessment.	37	30	48
d). Number of Armed Forces personnel entering treatment.	27	25	33

e). Number of Armed Forces personnel completing treatment	5	15	25
f). Average or median wait from referral to assessment	17 Days	15 Days	20 Days
g). Average or median wait from referral to first treatment appointment	20 Days	16 Days	17 Days
h). Recovery, reliable improvement or other outcome measures for Ex Armed Forces personnel, where separately recorded. */			
Recovery	60%	60%	68%
Reliable improvement	80%	67%	96%
Reliable Recovery	60%	60%	68%
i). DNA/non-attendance rates for Armed Forces personnel, where separately recorded	16%	11%	8%

<i>Below are yearly Recovery Targets</i>			
	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Recovery	50%	52%	52%
Reliable improvement	67%	67%	68%
Reliable Recovery	48%	48%	50%

Recording of Armed Forces status

Please confirm:

a. Whether Armed Forces status is routinely recorded in NHS Talking Therapies referrals or assessments

Yes, status is recorded at registration with the Service, or at any subsequent point if this information is found to be incomplete or inaccurate.

The status is recorded in a broad way (i.e., whether a patient is currently or has been a member of the armed forces, is a carer, dependent, or immediate family member (non-dependant) of a member of the armed forces).

b. Whether the categories distinguish between serving personnel, reservists, veterans and family members.

Please refer to the response above and note that patients are asked if they are a family member. We do not distinguish between currently serving members or ex-armed forces.

c. Whether this information is recorded in a structured data field or only in free text

This is a structured data field and data associated with this can be extracted.

d. Whether the ICB has any local guidance on identifying or recording Armed Forces status within mental health or talking therapy services

As a national programme, the guidance on identifying or recording armed forces status comes from NHS England (NHSE).

Dedicated pathways, protocols or agreements

Please provide copies of, or links to, any recorded:

a. Referral protocols between NHS Talking Therapies and Defence Medical Services.

There are no specific referral protocols.

b. Referral protocols between NHS Talking Therapies and Departments of Community Mental Health or other Defence mental health services.

There are no specific protocols related to referrals of members of the armed forces.

c. Memoranda of understanding, service level agreements or local pathway documents relating to serving Armed Forces personnel and psychological therapies.

There is no formal memoranda of understanding (MOU) however, we observe the Veterans Covenant that stipulates that veterans are entitled to priority access to NHS TT Services related to their military service.

d. Commissioned arrangements with third sector or Armed Forces charities for psychological support, talking therapies, counselling, online support or related mental health provision for serving personnel.

None that have been directly commissioned by Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board (BSOL ICB).

Online, digital and third sector psychological support

Please provide details of any online, digital or third sector psychological support commissioned, funded or formally promoted by the ICB for people with mild to moderate anxiety, depression, stress, adjustment difficulties or related presentations.

For each service, please provide where held:

- a. Name of service.
- b. Provider.
- c. Whether it is available to serving Armed Forces personnel.
- d. Whether access is by self-referral, GP referral, NHS Talking Therapies referral or another route.
- e. Annual cost to the ICB, where held.

- f. Annual uptake or usage data, where held.
- g. Whether usage by serving Armed Forces personnel is separately recorded.

We do not hold the requested information and advise you redirect your query to Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board (BSOL ICB) on the following: bsol.foi@nhs.net

Strategy, needs assessment and equality considerations

Please provide copies of, or links to, any current:

- a. Needs assessments relating to Armed Forces communities and mental health.
- b. Health inequalities assessments or equality impact assessments relating to NHS Talking Therapies access.
- c. Commissioning strategies or service reviews that discuss Armed Forces personnel, reservists, or Armed Forces families in relation to mental health, psychological therapies or early intervention.

We do not hold the requested information and advise you redirect your query to Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board (BSOL ICB) on the following: bsol.foi@nhs.net

Commissioning and contract information

Please provide:

- a. The current contract period for NHS Talking Therapies provision.

We are commissioned via a contract with BSOL ICB, until 31st March 2028.

- b. The annual contract value for NHS Talking Therapies provision, where not commercially exempt.

As a cost per case contract, the annual value is dependent on completed activity.

c. The ICB role responsible for commissioning NHS Talking Therapies. A generic team name or generic mailbox is sufficient. I am not requesting personal staff details.

We do not hold the requested information and advise you redirect your query to Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board (BSOL ICB) on the following: bsol.foi@nhs.net