



# Tackling Serious Stress in Veterans, Families and Carers



# While we all face difficulties that can affect our health and wellbeing, we understand that the challenges faced by veterans and those who support them are wholly unique.

Delivered in conjunction with the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, the **Recovery Together Programme** offers ongoing support, resources and information tailored to the individual wellbeing needs of each veteran, their families and carers, ensuring that the most appropriate care is delivered where and when it's needed.



**Inspire** is the largest and longest established independent charity focusing on mental health and wellbeing in Northern Ireland.

We are leaders in the provision of counselling and psychological therapy services, with a wealth of experience in meeting the needs of special occupational groups who are routinely, unavoidably exposed to line of duty trauma.

Over time, this can increase the likelihood of developing a stress or related mental health condition, anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and addictions – all of which put pressure on interpersonal relationships and family life. Many veterans also experience difficulty making the transition and adjusting from the structure of military life to civilian life.

We currently provide wellbeing support to over 75,000 security-based personnel and for over a decade have worked closely with veterans in partnership with the UDR & R IRISH(HS) Aftercare Service.



For over 40 years, **Addiction NI** have been the leading counselling, support and information service for people affected by alcohol and drug misuse in Northern Ireland.

Our approach is based on **reducing harm and promoting recovery**, with a number of specialist services and interventions tailored for those who encounter a high prevalence of trauma and addiction.



## A whole family approach

The **Recovery Together Programme** has been designed on and prioritises a '**whole family approach**'. It recognises that the challenges faced by the individual will impact upon the wider family, and therefore aims to support and strengthen the family unit, agreeing on and moving towards goals at each stage of the recovery process.

The whole family approach uses a number of agencies working in partnership to deliver a wide range of tailored support, resources and information services, based on a bespoke and dynamic support plan which will respond to and meet challenges as they emerge.

## Your support plan

A **Case Manager** will support you and your family throughout the process which, following referral, begins with an initial assessment.

This assessment will help to identify the specific needs of each individual, family and carers in relation to their mental health and wellbeing, ensuring that everyone is supported in the best way possible. Following the assessment, together you will create a **Support Plan** which provides a framework to address identified needs, as well as agreeing goals, timeframes to meet those goals, and regularly reviewing your progress.

“Giving you an active role in your own self-identified and self-directed care.”





# Supporting you

Supporting you and your family in maintaining good mental health is at the heart of the programme. Your **Support Plan** will identify the best way in which we can do that together.

We have a wide range of support options, ranging from **advocacy** through to **psychological therapies**, alongside more novel, holistic approaches. Your **Case Manager** will work with you to identify which of them will help to meet your needs in the best way possible.



## ADVOCACY

Our bespoke, certified advocacy training programme will train, equip and support individuals with the skills to advocate for themselves as well as for others. Advocacy can help those who feel they have no voice, have lost their voice, or are not being heard, by redressing the imbalance of power and helping to negotiate and overcome barriers to access the right services and support.

## LIVING WITH PTSD FOR FAMILIES

This ten-week programme educates and supports families and loved ones on the symptoms of PTSD and the impact of PTSD on the family and family unit. In addition, the programme will provide a safe environment where members can talk about and share their personal experiences of living with a loved one experiencing PTSD.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL THERAPY

With over 200 therapists, we can provide timely access to a wide range of supportive counselling, through to more specialist interventions, which includes evidence-based trauma-focused interventions.

## ADDICTION SUPPORT SERVICES

Addiction NI can provide specialist addiction support services for those veterans experiencing issues with problematic alcohol and drug use, as well as provide information, guidance and support to their families.

## TELEPHONE BASED COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY

This telephone or Skype based CBT programme is aimed at those for whom face-to-face support is currently inaccessible due to physical health, mental health or for personal reasons.

## HORTICULTURAL THERAPY

Led by a certified horticultural therapist with experience in supporting specialist occupational groups, this programme has been developed to increase wellbeing and decrease depression and anxiety levels; teaching a range of practical ways to reconnect with nature, calm the body and tame the mind in a peaceful therapeutic setting.

## TRAUMA SENSITIVE MINDFULNESS

Through this six-week Mindfulness programme, individuals will begin to learn that as they become more fully aware of emotions, they can begin to identify, observe and challenge negative thoughts and behavioural patterns – helping to manage stress, sharpen focus and creativity, build resilience and cultivate compassion and positive self-care.

## HORSES FOR FAMILIES

This novel therapeutic support utilises group activities – learning, focused on and involving horses. It does not require any equestrian or riding skills

and is designed for those who feel overwhelmed and are struggling to settle into or adjust to everyday life, but who may be reluctant to engage with more traditional, 'office based' interventions.

## MUSIC FOR FAMILIES

Music can be a powerful stress management tool, by calming the body and taming the mind. Delivered within group settings, this unique form of therapy will instill connectedness and a sense of camaraderie.



# Contact us

Information about the programme can be accessed via a number of partners including:

- Veteran Support Charities
- UDR & R IRISH(HS) Aftercare Service
- Northern Ireland Veterans Support Office

For more information on referral, contact Inspire directly on:

**T: 03308 089 294**

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