



Honouring Armed Forces veterans living in Lewisham

Former members of the Armed Forces in Lewisham will benefit from enhanced person-centred care and support after the care home they live in achieved the standards required for the Veteran Friendly Framework (VFF).

The Welcome Care Home manager Andrew Newland said: "We are so proud to have achieved VFF status. This vital addition towards providing a fully person-centred, holistic service is making a difference to the veterans who live at Welcome care home."

To achieve their Veteran Friendly status the home was required to meet eight standards. These included noting Armed Forces status within care plans; addressing social isolation; and signposting to support services, such as their local Royal British Legion branch, and other charities that provide support for veterans or partners of veterans.

As part of their VFF status the Welcome Care Home signed up and committed to His Majesties Armed Forces Covenant and was also awarded a Bronze Certificate from the Employers Recognition Scheme run by the Ministry of Defence.

Andrew commented: "We identified the Veterans and spouses of veterans in our care and created person-centred care plans that reflected their veteran status. We also placed poppies and regimental cap badges on their bedroom doors so that they would feel recognised and appreciated."

During the Remembrance Day commemorations, the home's veterans laid a poppy wreath at the local Cenotaph. Veteran Randolph, who served in the Royal Anglian regiment and was posted around the world, including the Falklands Conflict said, "I'm happy to be here, it's good to see the parade and hear the sound of marching, and to meet soldiers from other regiments."

Andrew continued, "During the course of our VFF journey, we had the privilege of working closely with OpCourage, a service dedicated to supporting veterans who are living with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and our local Care Home Intervention Team. This is helping to ensure that Veterans, especially those who are also living with dementia, receive the compassionate, specialised care that they deserve, and that their unique needs are properly addressed within the wider health and social care system".



The VFF is a collaboration between Armed Forces charities Royal Star & Garter and Royal British Legion, and NHS Veterans' Covenant Healthcare Alliance (VCHA). Its aim is to better support the practical, emotional and social needs of the Armed Forces community, in nursing and residential care homes across England, by providing training and resources to assess and improve the care they offer. It helps to tackle loneliness and has the scope to deliver improved health and wellbeing outcomes for the approximately 25,000 veterans living in care homes in England.

VFF Project Lead Kathryn Glass said: "We're delighted that Welcome Care Home has achieved VFF status. This is a great commitment to their continuous improvement in the delivery of person-centred care for veteran residents and their partners. This programme will benefit both current and future residents, along with current and future staff at Welcome Care Home who are able to access enhanced training and guidance to better engage with the unique military experiences that their residents and partners have lived through. Being a VFF care home means that there is an increased understanding and recognition for the veteran community at Welcome Care Home."

Any care homes interested in receiving more information about the VFF can visit www.starandgarter.org/veteran-friendly-framework, or email VFF@starandgarter.org

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Notes to editors:

National census data (2021) identifies direct veteran status;

- Of the 340,355 care home residents in England and Wales, 26520 (7.79%) were veterans, 25,085 of these are in England.
- Nearly half (46.50%) of the 15,765 communal establishments classed as care homes in England and Wales housed at least one veteran.

We do not know the number of partners and widow(er)s of veterans in care homes, so members of the Armed Forces community in care homes will be much higher than the Census data on veterans alone indicates. The Veteran Friendly Framework is designed for this wider Armed Forces community.

The VFF programme is currently funded by the Royal British Legion and Royal Star & Garter, with support from the Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance (VCHA).





[Royal Star & Garter](#) provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia, helping them to lead happy, fulfilled lives. Their three Homes offer specialist full time and short break residential care, along with a programme of outreach services including Lunch Clubs and telephone support.

[The Royal British Legion](#) has six care homes providing residential, nursing and respite care for hundreds of older veterans and their dependants. They also support individuals needing specialist dementia care and provide a unique environment that recognises and celebrates residents' service to the country.

[Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance](#) The NHS in England is committed to raising standards among healthcare providers of Veterans' services. The Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance (VCHA) is a group of NHS providers, including acute, mental health, community, and ambulance trusts that have agreed to be exemplars of the best care for, and support to, the armed forces' community. They do this through their Veteran Aware accreditation model, which has been widened to include the independent sector and hospices, which encourages providers to identify those patients with an Armed Forces background.