

Armed Forces Personnel and Veterans Joint Group submission of 30 October 2023

PE2032/D: Improve the support available to injured soldiers and veterans in Scotland

I refer you to your email of 6 October asking for the views of the Armed Forces Personnel and Veterans Joint Group on the actions called for in Petition 2032. I am writing in my capacity as secretariat of the Armed Forces Personnel and Veterans Joint Group (known as 'the Joint Group') and I have addressed the request to provide information on the work being carried out to develop a Scottish Veterans Treatment pathway.

The priorities set by the Joint Group in May 2021 included, as is mentioned in the above petition, exploring setting up a Scottish Veterans Trauma Network.

A Working Group, bringing together representatives from Op Restore, NHS Armed Forces Champions and Veterans Charities has been established and is helping develop and drive this work forward. The Scottish Veterans Treatment Pathway (SVTP) is still in development. We anticipate that it will be delivered in 2024.

To meet the needs of veterans, an holistic approach to support is required and the Scottish Government are working with colleagues across the NHS and the veteran's community to help design and develop the SVTP.

Officials have engaged extensively with colleagues in NHS England to understand the principles of, and the approach taken by, Op Restore (previously named Veterans Trauma Network) and how this might be applied in Scotland.

The intention of the SVTP is to support any veteran presenting with a service-related physical injury, which remains a cause for concern despite treatment, either previous or current. The proposed pathway aims to supplement and support existing service provision, and provide a dedicated pathway to explore treatment options and enhanced co-ordination of care where required.

The proposed pathway will bring together a multi-disciplinary team (MDT) who understand the military context of such an injury, and will

review the case and consider what might be required to support the veteran to live well.

The review will not guarantee further clinical treatment however, it may make a recommendation for such, as is the case with Op Restore. The review may also signpost the veteran to other sources of assistance such as appropriate Third Sector organisations or mental health services to help them live well as a result of their injury.

An update on this priority, and the other work of the Joint Group has been included in the annual update to Parliament and to the Scottish Veterans Commissioner for her latest progress report. [SVC publishes annual progress report | News | Scottish Veterans Commissioner](#)

I hope this response is helpful both to the Committee and to the petitioner.