

What is Op COURAGE?

Op COURAGE: The Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Service provides specialist care and support for people who have served in the Armed Forces and are experiencing mental ill health.

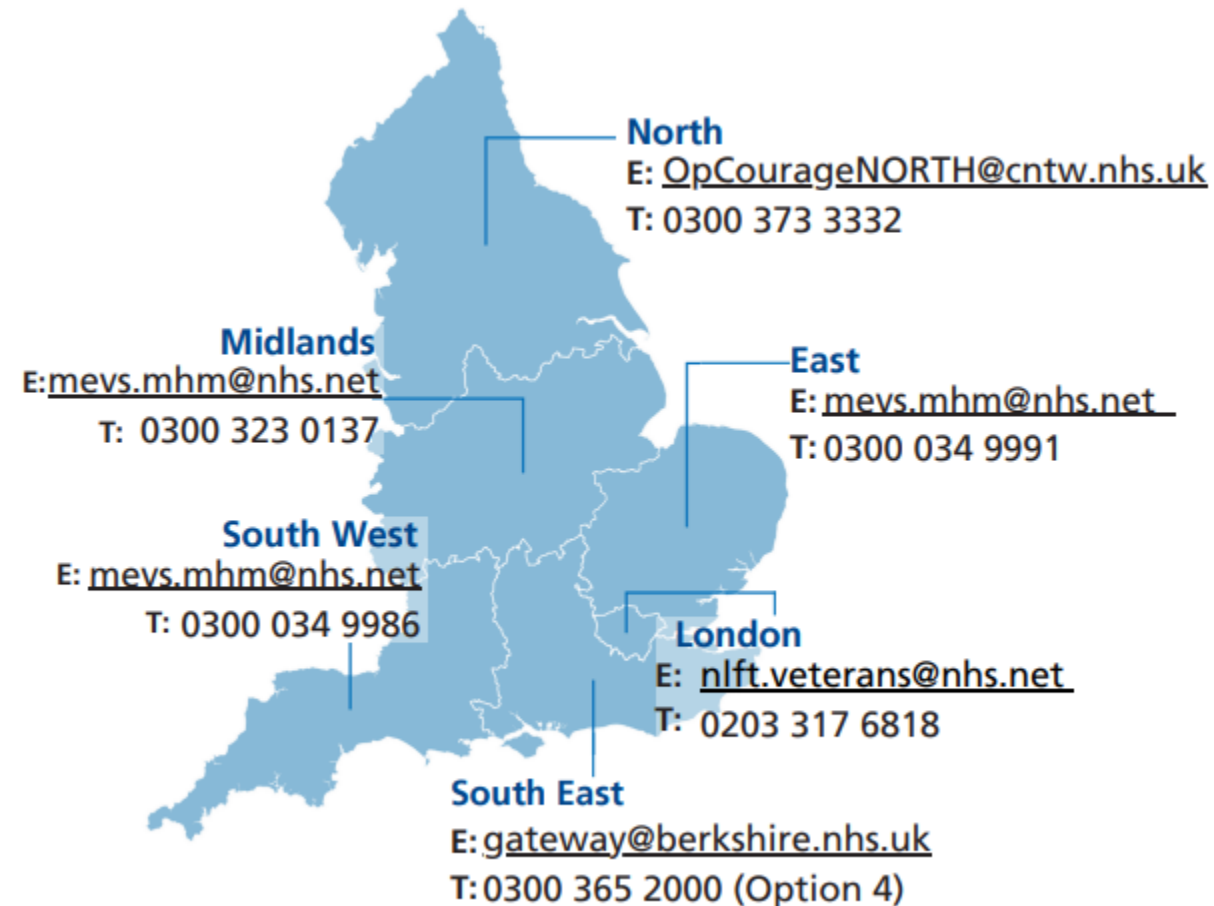
Who is Op COURAGE for?

Op COURAGE provides support to serving personnel due to leave the UK Armed Forces, reservists and veterans who live in England.

To receive help and support from Op COURAGE, you must:

- be a resident in England and have served in the UK Armed Forces for a full day
- be registered with a GP surgery in England, or be willing and eligible to [register with a GP](#)
- provide your military service number.

It does not matter how long ago you left the Armed Forces or how long you have served for, Op COURAGE is here for you.



www.nhs.uk/opcourage

194,000 Veterans (3.8%)

1240 referrals

50-60 age group vs under 30

“I have already flown the flag for Op Courage in a RMC Group chat, two of the lads had already engaged with you.

Apart from the whole process being absolutely life changing, every day there seems to be something else I notice and one hundred percent attribute it to the treatment I have had.

You asked me how I felt on Remembrance Sunday. I really could not articulate it at the time.

Again I did the opposite of what I or anyone else expected...

I put my lid on and medals and walked down to the village without telling anyone. I have only ever put my beret and medals on twice in public since leaving. One was another Bootnecks funeral. Regretful and possibly resentful of the twenty plus years I wasted and the way I was treated, how low and close I got before I called you.

Then I realised where and why I stood there, I'm so happy I did “

'I was going at 100mph after returning from war'



RHYS THURTELL

Former soldier Rhys Thurtell joined the Army when he was 17

George King

BBC News, Norfolk

10 December 2024

A former soldier who felt like he "was going at 100mph" after returning from war said seeking help for his mental health struggles saved his life.

Rhys Thurtell, 35, from Norwich, was one of thousands of veterans supported by Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust's specialist mental health service.

He was diagnosed with severe complex post-traumatic stress disorder in 2015 and attempted to take his own life in December 2022.

"Whatever situation or struggle you find yourself in right now, understand that life's toughest battles are given to its strongest soldiers," he said.

'Blessed to be here'

After waking up from a coma in December 2022, Mr Thurtell joined Op Courage, a specialist mental health service for veterans.

He now works with two charities which support Armed Forces veterans and has a home, a job and plans to start his own company.

"It has been life-changing and without the support they gave me I wouldn't be here," said Mr Thurtell.

"You can't fix yourself overnight but I manage my mental health now. I wake up and think life is so beautiful and I am so blessed to be here."