

SEPTEMBER 2019

UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERIENCE OF RESERVISTS AND EMPLOYERS IN PRIMARY CARE IN ENGLAND

Overview

NHS Employers, part of the NHS Confederation, is the employers' organisation for the NHS in England. We help employers to develop a sustainable workforce, improve staff experience and be the best employers they can be.

The organisation has a strong track record in developing and promoting the best employment practice based on evidence. Over the last four years, NHS Employers has been commissioned to deliver a series of outputs in the area of supporting reservists in the NHS. This work is to ultimately encourage joined-up working between the Ministry of Defence (MoD), key national organisations and employers, to support an ongoing commitment to champion the value and wealth of skills that reservists can bring to the NHS, to drive up the quality of care to patients.

In the 2019-20, we were asked to engage with primary care employers enabling us, alongside the MoD and the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), to ascertain if the current offer is understood in this part of the health sector and whether any adjustments should be considered.



Ministry
of Defence



Department
of Health &
Social Care

The current offer

Medical reservists receive rigorous, world-class training and qualifications within the military. The training includes transferable skills which directly benefit their role in the civilian workplace and therefore the employer. Training commitments vary but are usually between nine and 27 days a year and typically include weekly training during evenings, weekend training spread throughout the year and a two-week annual camp. In recognition of the value of the skills gained from training, many employers provide additional paid or unpaid leave to reservists. Mobilisation is when reservists are deployed to military operations for periods lasting between three and 12 months. The employer will always receive advance notice of this, the notice period can range from 28–90 days.

Included in the package of financial and wider support for employers, the MoD provides:

- a temporary replacement to a maximum of £110 a day for each reservist mobilised
- advertising costs and agency fees for finding a temporary replacement
- 75 per cent of the cost of specialist clothing for the person providing cover (up to £300)
- up to £2,000 training costs for the person providing cover
- overtime, if other employees cover the reservist's work
- any training the reservist needs when they return to work.

[Take this survey](#) to help inform the support we give.



“The ‘can do’ attitude that the RAF instils in its personnel has been a strong motivator in project managing patient pathways and service design within my CCG.”

GP and RAF reservist

Evidence base – employing members of the Armed Forces

In our work supporting employers to engage with the Armed Forces, we are frequently asked about the tangible benefits employers can expect from employing members of this community.

We have collated employer views from across the NHS and combined them with existing research from the private sector, to develop an evidence base that highlights the benefits of employing reservists and the wider Armed Forces community at a local level.

[Read the report in full](#) or [download the infographic](#) to see key highlights.

Employing staff in the Reserve Forces model policy example

We have developed a [model policy example](#) for employing reservists which outlines the guidance and support available to employers of the Armed Forces within England.

This policy example is adaptable to your organisation and suggests offers you may wish to make to reservists within your workforce such as additional leave and allowance for military training commitments.

Key facts on employing reservists

This [factsheet](#) tells you all you need to know about having members of the reserve forces as part of your workforce - from the training commitments to how to manage mobilisation effectively. We encourage employers to share this with their line managers to help raise the profile of supporting the armed forces and bust any misconceptions that people may have around supporting reservists.

Scenario-based managers' guides

The following set of five scenarios provide useful information and tips to guide a manager through supporting reservist colleagues:

- [Joining the Reserve Forces](#)
- [Training and annual camp](#)
- [Mobilisation - the call up](#)
- [Mobilisation - operational tour](#)
- [Mobilisation - return to work](#)

How to support the Armed Forces in the NHS guide

Use this [informative guide](#) to find all of the necessary information on the Armed Forces agenda within the NHS, including the steps that employers can take to offer an effective approach on how to advocate and demonstrate support to the Armed Forces community.

Contact us

Find out more about how you can support the Armed Forces community in your organisation [on our website](#).

Follow us on Twitter [@NHSEArmedForces](#) for all our latest news and updates.

Get in touch with us by emailing armedforces@nhsemployers.org