



PRESS RELEASE

NEW SUPPORT SERVICE FOR THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY SUPPORTING THOSE CARING FOR PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

Wiltshire Mind, Healios and AFF secure Forces in Mind Trust grant to support Army carers

29th September 2014, Melksham, UK - Wiltshire Mind, Healios, and the Army Families Federation (AFF) have secured a *Forces in Mind Trust* grant to fund a pilot project. The project will support carers of people within the Armed Forces Community dealing with severe mental illness including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, adjustment disorder, psychosis, schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.

The grant will be used to set up an online support service predominantly for those caring for Service personnel with mental illnesses as they transition back to civilian life. The service will also be available to Serving and ex-Service personnel caring for a loved one.

Providing bespoke psycho-education and skills training to carers of people suffering with severe mental illness, the service will take an innovative and proactive approach to empower carers as they look after their loved one.

Being online based, Healios' service can provide easily accessible and professional support to families, who, due to the nature of roles in the Army, may have moved away from their personal support networks. The service, which will initially be available to 50 carers from the Armed Forces community in Wiltshire and the surrounding counties, is due to launch in November 2014. The AFF will help recruit carers for the service.

David Mckeigue, Chief Executive of Wiltshire Mind said "This is a unique online service which focuses on helping the carer deliver significantly better outcomes for themselves and indeed their loved one, and, because of the way the service is delivered, the number of carers that can access the service is significantly higher than conventional face to face methods. Wiltshire Mind is delighted to be partnering with both the AFF and Healios on this exciting pilot. The innovative approach and unique service delivery of Healios is of huge value and benefit to all carers wherever they may be located."

More details of the project and how to register can be found at: www.wiltshiremind.co.uk or call 01225 706532 or email: office@wiltshiremind.co.uk

Ray Lock, Chief Executive of the Forces in Mind Trust said: "Giving carers access to vital support and resources will help them understand the types of issues their loved ones could experience. The evaluation of this pilot programme will provide the evidence-base we need to support carers further and we are proud to support Wiltshire Mind in this innovative project."

Richard Andrews, co-founder of Healios, commented, "We're pleased that the value of our service has been recognised in this way by the *Forces in Mind Trust* and we look forward to working with Wiltshire Mind and the AFF to reach out to this important part of our community. We exist to provide the best support possible for carers as their loved one makes the, sometimes difficult, transition back to civilian life. We're confident that our service will make a positive impact on the whole family and its success will serve to inform future models of care for the Armed forces."



A spokesperson for the AFF said: We are pleased to be working alongside Wiltshire MIND and Healios on this project and delighted that the Forces in Mind Trust has recognised its potential value for the Armed Forces community. AFF work closely with Army families and are aware of carers within our community that would certainly benefit from utilising this service.

- ENDS -

For further information please contact:

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About Wiltshire MIND:

Wiltshire Mind, established in 1993, is a voluntary independent Mental Health Charity, which provides county-wide services. It is affiliated to Mind and works to improve the quality of life for vulnerable people with mental health issues by providing services such as peer support groups and reduced cost professional counselling. The Charity last year supported over 3000 service user visits to their peer support groups and delivered some 500 counselling sessions.

About Healios:

Healios is an international organisation, which exists to support carers of people with mental illness, and in turn make a positive impact on the future recovery of the person with the illness.

Healios offers carers clinically effective techniques to use as they care for their loved one, combined with tailored education and support. Carers are able to schedule sessions to fit in with their daily routine - via phone or video call - with Healios' team of clinicians, making it possible for carers across the UK to have access to a highly professional service. Since launching in June 2013, Healios has provided over 2,000 sessions to carers across the UK. Both qualitative and quantitative feedback has demonstrated the value and effectiveness of the service.

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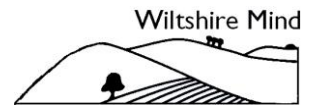
www.healios.org/FiMT

About the Forces in Mind Trust:

The Forces in Mind Trust came about from a partnership between the Big Lottery Fund (BIG), Cobseo (The Confederation of Service Charities) and other charities and organisations. FiMT continues BIG's long-standing legacy of support for veterans across the UK with an endowment of £35 million awarded in 2012. Since 2004 BIG has given more than £88 million to programmes supporting veterans. <http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/>.

During its first two years, FiMT has commissioned seminal research reports such as the Transition Mapping Study (TMS), which reviewed how the entire transition process from military to civilian life currently works and how it is viewed by stakeholders and recent Service leavers. The economic model developed for the report calculated the total cost of poor transition to the UK as a whole to be £113 million in 2012, whilst the report itself has been discussed across Whitehall and debated in the House of Lords.

About AFF: The Army Families Federation (AFF) is the independent voice of Army families and works hard to improve the quality of life for Army families around the world - on any aspect that is affected by the Army



lifestyle. AFF is independent of the Army and offers confidential advice. AFF is often pivotal in achieving improvements for Army families such as changes to Government and military policy and changes to the delivery of how things are provided for families. AFF does not do this by itself; their role is to highlight problems to the chain of command or service providers, and to work with them and other agencies to improve the support they provide to Service families. AFF also provides a signposting service to help you find the right person to speak to, as well as providing useful information for Army families through its website and magazine, Army&You.