

Veterans Trauma Network



VTN Newsletter – Q4 2022-23

Welcome to our latest newsletter in what has been yet again a busy few months. We are excited to see referrals continuing to increase and we continue to be joined by more charitable partners. Our charity partners are vital to providing our success in providing holistic veteran centred care.

Our national conference in January was a great opportunity to take stock of how far we have come and the steps we need to take going forward. We are looking forward to tackling more challenges in the next quarter with a focus on chronic pain and transition.

Thank you everyone who has shared information about the VTN, by doing so you really are helping us to ensure we can support as many veterans as need us including their families and carers.

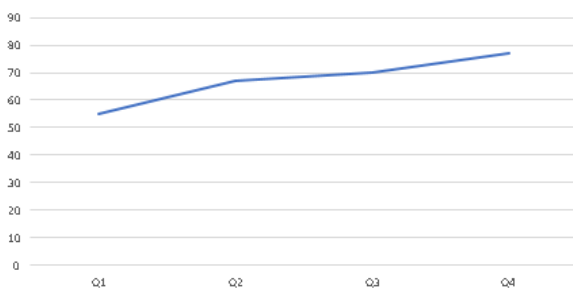
The VTN team

Activity Q4 2022-23

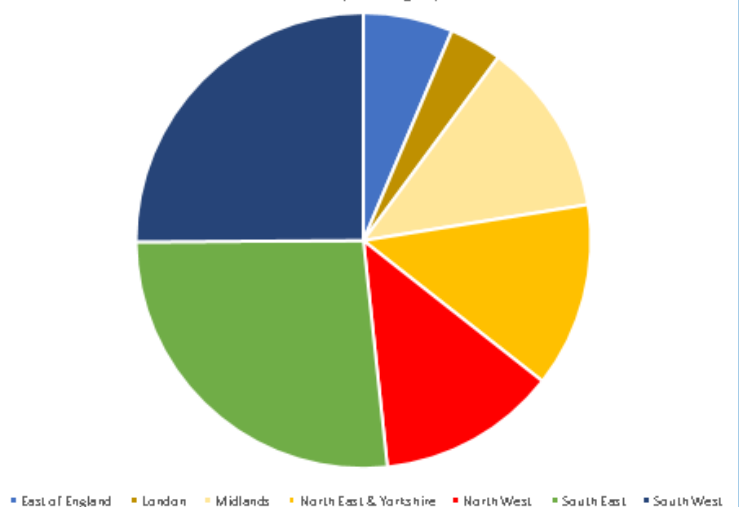
2022-23 has been another busy year for VTN, closing the financial year with 267 referrals received – a 79% increase on the previous financial year.

- Over 600 referrals logged since 2016
- 82% of veterans were referred for musculoskeletal issues with pain
- 69% of veterans referred also have mental health issues
- 27% of referrals are from RCGP Veteran Friendly Accredited GP Practices

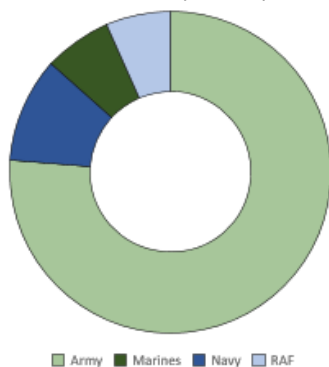
Referral Growth 2022-23



2022-23 Referrals by Geographical Area



2022-23 Referrals by Military Service



VTN Conference

In January we held our VTN Conference at Cavendish Square in London. With over 170 attendees in person and online, we were delighted to welcome Johnny Mercer MP, Minister for Veterans' Affairs who confirmed a commitment to supporting veterans physical healthcare.



(L-R Tracey Culley, Shehan Hettiarachy, Johnny Mercer MP, Beth Lambert, Phil Hall)

The event was opened by Kate Davies CBE, Director of Health and Justice, Armed Forces and Sexual Assault Services, NHS England and we had speakers from the devolved administrations, military charities and Armed Forces social prescribing.

Key topics covered on the day were the progress of veterans physical healthcare in the devolved administration, how the VTN works with charity partners and social prescribing and how we are looking to work alongside the MOD supporting transition for those with service-related physical health needs. The conference was a great opportunity for colleagues to link in with other organisations in the veterans physical healthcare space. As a result we have been able to increase our links with both military charities and NHS Trusts since the conference.



Awareness Sessions

Over 110 colleagues across Op Courage and military charities joined us for our awareness sessions in February and March to raise awareness of the VTN and our referral pathway. We are planning to run these quarterly with the next one planned for 3 July. We will share the Teams link nearer the date and are also happy to provide a Teams brief on an adhoc basis to any colleagues. Please email us to arrange: ENGLAND.veteranstraumanetwork@nhs.net

We also have a regular slot on the GP training package on veterans run by Julian Woodhouse. So far we have delivered information to over 100 new GPs on the VTN.

Spreading the Word

We have continued to connect with colleagues across the Armed Forces in 2022-23. In particular we have made additional connections with the MOD around our transition focus. As we enter 2023-24, this will continue to reach out and ensure we have as many organisations in our 'safety net' as possible. This will help us to ensure all eligible veterans can access support from the VTN and receive the appropriate wrap around support and sign posting.

Into 2023-24...

Rebranding

VTN have been fortunate to have been allocated funds from the Office of Veterans' Affairs (OVA) for a rebrand. This is currently in progress and we will share next steps with stakeholders as soon as possible. As a result, there will be a new suite of leaflets, referral form and communications available in the next few months.

Research

As a result of 2 successful submission to the Health Innovation Fund (HIF) which is overseen by the OVA, the VTN will be supporting research programmes looking at Female Veterans and an evaluation of VTN. These are both coordinated by Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) and we will update you on progress and how you might be able to be involved later in the year.

Reminder

- The VTN **does not** accelerate access to NHS care.
- **All onward referrals made by the VTN are in line with NHS waiting times** – the VTN are unable to expedite these any quicker and waiting times vary for different specialties across the country.
- The aim of the VTN is to put veterans with a service-related physical health need in touch with a military consultant and/or the best consultant to support their clinical needs.
- All prioritisation of veteran referrals by NHS Trusts will be on **clinical grounds**, as confirmed in the Armed Forces Covenant.

Thank You!

Thank you to all who have continued to support the VTN through its evolution
We couldn't do it without you!