

Support plan boosts confidence of military spouses

April 16 2020

A support programme that aims to boost retention in the Armed Forces has received a positive research evaluation from Anglia Ruskin University (ARU), with military personnel reporting increased confidence in their employment prospects and increased goodwill towards the Armed Forces.

A pilot of the Spouse Employment Support (SES) programme was delivered from 2015-2017 by the Ministry of Defence to try and address some of the issues facing military spouses.

Previous research has found that the transient nature of military life, particularly in the Army where transfers between barracks occur with regularity, can have a negative impact on the careers of spouses, who often have to uproot at short notice.

Common issues include interruption to higher education, [negative impact](#) on [career](#) progression, and difficulty starting again in new areas, particularly if they are employed in a specialist field or if they have had a break from work.

These problems can in turn breed resentment of military life, which has a knock-on effect on retention of personnel.

The SES helped military spouses search for and find employment by providing training grants of up to £879 and specialist career support. The pilot was open to 195 spouses of RAF personnel across 22 bases in the

UK, and 240 spouses of Joint Forces Command across four locations in Cyprus.

The evaluation, carried out by ARU's Veterans and Families Institute for Military Social Research (VFI) and published in the journal *Military Psychology*, consisted of 30-minute interviews with spouses and [military personnel](#).

Two thirds of military spouses reported increased confidence, while around a third said they felt valued and supported by the military, and that taking part in the SES trial had increased their employability.

One partner of an RAF Corporal based in Cyprus said: "Any sort of recognition, of the fact that it's difficult to find work makes people feel better. I don't think people realise the fact that you sacrifice your family, your career, your personal life essentially. Because you're forced to move around constantly."

Author of the evaluation, Dr. Lauren Godier-McBard at ARU, said: "There was a strong indication from the interviews we carried out that the support given by the SES was of benefit to military spouses and, indirectly, their serving partners.

"Simply accessing this support and beginning to think about employment and their career aspirations prompted a number of spouses to become more proactive in engaging with the job market and planning their career.

"Furthermore, our results have highlighted the value placed by military spouses of being recognised by the military as valued constituents in their own right. Some of the serving partners indicated that their [spouses](#) appeared happier with military life as a result of the support and training they had received."

More information: Lauren R. Godier-McBard et al, Confident, valued and supported: examining the benefits of employment support for military spouses, *Military Psychology* (2020). [DOI: 10.1080/08995605.2020.1731251](https://doi.org/10.1080/08995605.2020.1731251)

Provided by Anglia Ruskin University

Citation: Support plan boosts confidence of military spouses (2020, April 16) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-04-boosts-confidence-military-spouses.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.