

PoppyScotland helping veterans into work

Veterans in Edinburgh and the Lothians can now access a local service that will deliver support to help vulnerable ex-Servicemen and women find work.

Veterans' charity Poppyscotland and mental health charity SAMH (Scottish Association for Mental Health) have created Employ-Able, which provides local support, training and practical advice to assist veterans in their search for jobs.

Employ-Able aims to remove barriers, help develop skills and set goals, taking the form of one-to-one and group work sessions, using the model of SAMH's successful workshop-based *Tools for Living* programme. Ongoing support once veterans are in employment is also available.

Bobby Duffy, Director of Operations at SAMH said:- "Scotland's veterans deserve as much support as we can give them when they settle back into the community. We know it can be hard for some veterans to get back into regular employment and that unemployment and financial difficulties are bad for your mental health, so we're really pleased to be working with Poppyscotland to deliver this service."

There are around 189,000 veterans of working age in Scotland and Poppyscotland research suggests that the unemployment rate for veterans aged 18-49 is twice that of the general UK population, with around 28,000 veterans in Scotland out of

work. The research found a lack of current employability services that specifically target veterans who may be vulnerable or need additional support to get back into work. Employ-Able is intended to address this gap.

Gary Gray, Head of Welfare Services at Poppyscotland, commented: "A small but significant number of veterans face difficulty in adjusting to civilian life with many facing complex and multiple issues. Employment and mental health are areas of great concern as they impact greatly on all aspects of veterans' lives and those of their families. By combining Poppyscotland's knowledge of veterans' issues and SAMH's expertise we believe Employ-Able will tackle some of these key areas of difficulty and improve veterans' prospects."

Army veteran William Burnett (23) served with the Royal Regiment of Scotland for four years and saw service in Afghanistan. After leaving the Armed Forces William struggled to find a secure job but he is now in full-time employment as a warehouse assistant after taking part in Employ-Able. He said: "I was a nervous wreck when it came to interviews and never got the jobs I applied for. Employ-Able really helped me to get my confidence back. It helped me to develop my skills and I received support to prepare for interviews and get my CV up to date.

"I am now in a full-time job, which is going really well, and I am still in contact with my work preparation adviser who is there to offer me ongoing support. I would recommend Employ-Able to anyone who is unsure about how to get back into work after their time in the Forces."

To find out more about Employ-Able call Poppyscotland's
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