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COMBAT STRESS

They fight our wars. We fight their battles.



EX-SERVICES MENTAL WELFARE SOCIETY
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Mr R Breeze
Managing Director
Towergate Charitable Foundation (Towergate Wilsons)
3 Smith Way
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14th December 2009

Dear Mr Breeze

I am pleased to provide an overview on the work and expansion of Combat Stress during 2009. We are all very grateful for donations like yours that have enabled us to help many Veterans and their families during 2009.

Demand for our specialist treatment and support is at an all time high. With continued deployment to Afghanistan under extremely difficult conditions added to the potentially significant numbers of Service men and women who have returned from Iraq with psychological injuries it is impossible to know in advance the clinical and welfare needs these Veterans will have or what numbers of new referrals we will see in the future.

The importance of the work you have supported cannot be over emphasised and I think the following letter, sent to our Chief Executive Officer by a Veteran, best conveys our gratitude to you, one of our supporters.

"This is to thank you and all your colleagues at Tyrwhitt House for all that was done for me during my recent stay. It was a most productive experience which has gone a long way towards helping me tackle a long standing illness and to feel positive about my future. Your people are absolutely delightful, thoroughly professional and clearly dedicated to the task. Moreover, you have created an atmosphere which is enormously restful and which enables me to leave all the stresses and strains of everyday life behind. Many congratulations to you for producing such a well run and happy ship.

I particularly enjoyed the company of my fellow guests/clients/patients. It is always good to share the company of those who come from a similar background. In this case, also both humbling and moving to hear of the experiences which had brought them to Tyrwhitt House. It was also reassuring to discover that Combat Stress cares so much for the welfare of ex-Servicemen and women that it is prepared to fuel and support such an excellent institution."

We are currently expanding our Community Outreach Services to complement the specialist therapies offered to Veterans at our Treatment Centres. Together, these provide important rehabilitation for Veterans back into their communities and with their families.

With very best wishes for Christmas and a successful New Year.

Yours sincerely

Pamela Deakin
Trusts and Foundations Manager
Enc: 2009 End of Year Overview

Donations:
£3,314 donated to date during 2009-2010 year.
£7,492 donated during 2008-2009 year.

Combat Stress 2009 End of Year Overview



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"Combat Stress didn't just save my sanity or sort my head out, Combat Stress saved my life. Scratch that: Combat Stress is saving my life day after day. Each time I visit I get recharged, to last a bit longer out in the world and look after my son and keep rebuilding. I'm on a metalwork course at college. It takes time but I'm getting my life back, I can be a student, a working man and a good Dad." (Jim, Combat Stress Veteran)

Every day and across the British Isles and Ireland, Combat Stress provides specialist treatments for ex-Service men and women with psychological injuries as a result of their service life.

These are: **Dedicated, short-stay clinical treatment**
Community outreach in a Veteran's local area

We are currently expanding our Community Outreach Services to complement the specialist therapies offered to Veterans at our Treatment Centres. Together, these provide important rehabilitation for Veterans back into their communities and families as well as decreasing pressure on in-patient beds.

Our specialist psychological therapies are provided free to Veterans at our 3 short-stay residential Centres as well as through our Community Outreach Service – a national network of Mental Health Practitioners, Community Psychiatric Nurses and Regional Welfare Officers. It is worth noting that Combat Stress supports the few whose trauma is so unique and chronic they are outside NHS provision.

We remain very grateful for all donations both large and small that together enable Combat Stress to continue to help these very deserving individuals.

How we have used your donations:

We are currently actively treating and supporting 4,221 Veterans and last year provided ex-Service men and women with 24,667 mandays of therapy and made 5,612 Welfare support visits to individual's homes. Our estimated running costs for 2010 will be over £10Million. And each multi-disciplinary Community Outreach Team is estimated to cost in the region of £230,000 in 2010.

We have secured funding and are currently in the process of appointing staff for the following Community Outreach Teams:

South West England
West Midlands & North Wales
North East England
North West England
Scotland East
Scotland West

Funding for another 10 Teams is needed

Beneficiaries are all ex-Service men and women with mental health injuries. Many are unable to work or have lost their ability to socialise with others, and many are suffering from chronic psychological conditions such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Our records indicate a high proportion have resorted to self-medication – mainly in the form of alcohol – to blank out unhappy times or memories. Often suffering from long-term poor mental health and long-term unemployment and isolation.

This year we marked the 90th Anniversary of Combat Stress with events in May at Westminster Abbey and St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh - Commemoration, Celebration and Rededication Ceremonies.

During 2009 the building work started on the new extension at Tyrwhitt House Treatment Centre and Head Office. These new facilities will be available in 2011, while our other Treatment Centres, Hollybush House and Audley Court, were extended during 2008/09 to meet increased demand.

Finally, July saw the retirement of Chief Executive Officer Commodore Toby Elliott. The expansion of Combat Stress is now led by Wing Commander David Hill our new Chief Executive Officer.

Thank you for your continued support of this vital work. Rest assured your donation has and will make a real difference to some very deserving people. December 2009

Report and Accounts for year ended 31st March 2009 available at www.combatstress.org.uk

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