



Australian Government  
Department of Veterans' Affairs

## **Factsheet MRC52 – Family Support Package for Veterans and their Families**

### **Purpose**

This Factsheet explains the services that might be available to you if you are eligible for the Family Support Package under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA).

### **What is the Family Support Package?**

The Family Support Package for MRCA veterans and their families, has been developed to address recommendations from the Senate Inquiry into Suicide by Veterans and Ex-Service Personnel, *The Constant Battle: Suicide by Veterans*.

The package will provide:

- expanded child care in specific circumstances to the children of MRCA veterans; and
- counselling support for the immediate family members of MRCA veterans, to enable the family unit to manage within its budget and maintain its connections to community and employment.

Assistance is also available to widowed partners and spouses under this package. Please see Factsheet MRC53 Family Support Package for Widow(er)s for more information.

### **When will the package commence?**

The Family Support Package will be available from 1 May 2018 for eligible persons.

### **Expanded Child Care**

*Who is eligible?*

To be considered for child care funding, you must:

- have an accepted MRCA condition; and
- have undertaken 'Warlike Service' on or after 1 July 2004; and

- be eligible for, or in receipt of incapacity payments; and
- currently participating in a Rehabilitation Program provided by DVA; and
- have an identified and justified requirement for child care services to help you achieve your rehabilitation goals.

You will also need to ensure you have been assessed for eligibility of Commonwealth child care requirements and that your child/ren meet the immunisation requirements for Commonwealth child care entitlements.

#### *What about Commonwealth child care entitlements?*

Child care funding under the Family Support Package is provided to complement, not replace or duplicate existing Commonwealth child care entitlements. Any child care funding provided by DVA is to cover the gap in fees after Commonwealth child care entitlements have been applied. In the event that the family income makes them ineligible for Commonwealth child care support, DVA will fund the fees owing. Coverage of this gap (partial or full fees) will be available up until the DVA child care funding has been exhausted.

#### *Who can provide the child care?*

Only Commonwealth approved child care providers can be used. Commonwealth approved providers can be found on Australia's online child care portal: [www.mychild.gov.au](http://www.mychild.gov.au).

Care cannot be provided through informal arrangements, such as care provided by grandparents, relatives or friends.

#### *How do I seek assistance with child care funding?*

In order to access the child care funding you must be participating in a DVA approved Rehabilitation Program and have an identified and justified requirement for child care services to help you achieve your rehabilitation goals. This means it is the DVA Registered Rehabilitation Program Provider's role to identify whether you might require child care services and provide rationale as to why these services are needed.

## **Counselling**

#### *Who is eligible?*

For your family to access the counselling support, you must:

- have an accepted MRCA condition; and
- have undertaken 'Warlike Service' on or after 1 July 2004; and
- be currently participating in a Rehabilitation Program provided by DVA; and

- your family has an identified need for counselling, to help you achieve your rehabilitation goals.

Counselling is intended to provide your immediate family members with assistance to manage challenging life circumstances that military service may have contributed to.

Family members who can access counselling include your children, partner, parents, siblings and grandparents.

*What counselling services are available?*

The types of counselling could include:

- resilience training
- grief and loss counselling
- drug and alcohol counselling
- personal and relationship counselling
- parenting skills and support counselling
- Mental Health First Aid Training
- financial counselling
- counselling for gambling

*Who can provide the counselling?*

The counselling services need to be provided by a professional with the appropriate qualifications, and where applicable, membership with a professional or industry body.

*How do I access counselling services?*

In order for your family to access child care services, you must be participating in a DVA approved Rehabilitation Program and your family must have an identified need for counselling services, to help you achieve your rehabilitation goals. This means it is the DVA Registered Rehabilitation Program Provider's role to identify whether your family might require counselling.

*How many counselling services can your family have?*

Your family can be provided with four counselling sessions each year, the year will commence on the date of the first counselling session. Access to counselling will cease at the end of a consecutive five-year period provided you are still participating in rehabilitation. This means that over the course of a five year rehabilitation program, your family can access up to 20 counselling sessions.

## **Immediate assistance**

Immediate counselling assistance can also be provided by the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS), which provides a free and confidential 24 hour counselling service for eligible veterans and their families on 1800 011 046.

## **More Information**

### **DVA General Enquiries**

Phone: 1800 555 254 \*

Email: [GeneralEnquiries@dva.gov.au](mailto:GeneralEnquiries@dva.gov.au)

DVA Website: [www.dva.gov.au](http://www.dva.gov.au)

Factsheet Website: [www.dva.gov.au/factsheets](http://www.dva.gov.au/factsheets)

\* Calls from mobile phones and pay phones may incur additional charges.

## **For specific questions about the Family Support Package**

Email: [family.support.package@dva.gov.au](mailto:family.support.package@dva.gov.au)

## **Related Factsheets**

- [MRC05 Rehabilitation](#)
- [MRC53 Family Support Package for Widow\(er\)s](#)
- [VCS01 Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service \(VVCS\)](#)

## **Disclaimer**

The information contained in this Factsheet is general in nature and does not take into account individual circumstances. You should not make important decisions, such as those that affect your financial or lifestyle position on the basis of information contained in this Factsheet. Where you are required to lodge a written claim for a benefit, you must take full responsibility for your decisions prior to the written claim being determined. You should seek confirmation in writing of any oral advice you receive from DVA.