



Press Release

EMBARGOED UNTIL 10:01 HOURS ON FRIDAY 21ST OCTOBER 2011

Downing Street Announces Improved Deal For Veteran Amputees

The announcement of the Murrison Review into prosthetic provision for veterans, undertaken on behalf of the Prime Minister by Dr Andrew Murrison MP, is warmly welcomed by BLESMA - the Limbless Veterans. With its experience and knowledge of the prosthetic issues and challenges faced by its Members throughout their lives BLESMA asked the Government to review how high standard prosthetic equipment could continue to be made available to amputee veterans about to leave the Armed Forces - where they would have received excellent prosthetic equipment and support from DMRC Headley Court - and how such equipment and support could be provided for veterans of earlier conflicts who deserve nothing less.

BLESMA has been properly consulted and their experience and advice about possible solutions has been listened to. BLESMA feels they are close to the prosthetic community, which has long striven to support all amputees - and particularly veterans injured in service - against a backdrop of low funding vulnerable to local resource issues (the so called postcode lottery). They believe the recommendations envisaged whereby a number of prosthetic centres will be selected to provide special expertise and will be furnished with specific funding, will be seen as an exciting and challenging prospect and they stand ready to play their full part. This is a significant step in prosthetic provision for veterans, which will certainly generate knock on benefits to all who need such support from the NHS. However modern battlefield injury poses real prosthetic challenges - neither BLESMA nor the NHS will ever have an opportunity to become complacent as we support and care for those who have lost limbs in the service of our country.

Jerome Church, General Secretary of BLESMA, added, "We do pay tribute to the military medical services for the care and support for amputees injured in recent conflicts. As our young veterans move on into the civilian world we are increasingly confident that the NHS will be able to provide the support - particularly in the area of prosthetics - which they will need for the rest of their lives. We believe such support is a national responsibility and BLESMA and other service charities expect such support to be sustained. In this respect we pay tribute in particular to COBSEO - The Confederation of Service Charities, and to Help for Heroes for their energetic and tireless support in this long campaign."

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For further information and to organise interviews please contact Arti Tailor on 020 7993 3190 or email artit@oneismore.com.

For more information on BLESMA, please visit www.blesma.org

Notes to Editors:

ABOUT BLESMA

BLESMA was formed in the years following the First World War, becoming a national charity in 1932.

Today BLESMA's membership consists of all those serving and ex service men and women who have lost limbs or the use of limbs serving during the Second World War and the many subsequent conflicts and peacekeeping operations since, including the Falklands, Northern Ireland and of course Iraq and Afghanistan. Today there are 3,700 members and widows.

The Association has a national headquarters in London, with local branches throughout the UK. It runs two care homes - in Blackpool and in Crieff (Scotland) -, which provide full residential and nursing services in up to date en-suite accommodation. They are also very popular with BLESMA Members for convalescence, respite or simply a break amongst old friends. They are lively places.

BLESMA has its own very effective and focused Welfare Service. It has a number of Members still serving in HM Forces and it counsels and helps rehabilitate all new casualties once they return from conflict zones and its expertise and experience is valued and appreciated by the Armed Forces and MoD authorities. Its rehabilitation work is about the fellowship of shared experience, is physically demanding and challenging and proves beyond doubt that there is life after amputation.