

VVFS ESO article

Family Study recruiting – Army personnel 1962 – 1975 sought

Did you serve in the Army from 1962 to 1975? If so, you can volunteer for an important role in the Vietnam Veterans' Family Study. The Study will compare the health and wellbeing of your family with that of those who served in Vietnam and aims to identify the impact of war service on families.

The information collected as part of the Study will help the Department of Veterans' Affairs plan for the future needs of service personnel and their families. Your participation in this Study will help support the health and wellbeing of future generations of servicemen and women.

For more information or to register visit www.dva.gov.au/vvfs or freecall 1800 502 302.

Who is in the Study

There are two main Study groups:

- Randomly selected Army Vietnam veterans and their families – including their partners, ex-partners, children, step children, brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews (the Vietnam veteran group).
- Randomly selected Army personnel who served from 1962 to 1975 but didn't go to Vietnam, and their families, including their partners, ex-partners, children and step-children (the comparison group).

If you served in the Army, Navy or Air Force from 1962 to 1975 or the veteran you are related to is deceased, you and your family are also welcome to take part in the Vietnam Veterans' Family Study. You will undertake the same survey as the main Study participants but due to scientific reasons, the results will be the focus of a separate report.

Recruitment to date

Recruitment for the Vietnam veterans' study group is on track but many more are needed for the comparison group: those who served in the Army from 1962 to 1975 but didn't go to Vietnam, and their families. This includes both regulars and national servicemen and their families.

If you served in the Australian Defence Force during this time you can help. If you know someone who served during the time of the Vietnam war, whether they went or not, talk to them, see if they've been invited and encourage them to get involved.

Why the Study is important

The Study will gather scientifically-based data on the long term effects of war service on the families of veterans. Even if you or your family had no effects from service, you are important to the Study – others can learn from your experience. The Study will examine why some families may have suffered no ill-effects and identify the characteristics which help build resilience in families.

Consultative Forum

A consultative forum comprising representatives of the groups participating in the Study has been established to provide a veteran view on Study issues. An independent scientific adviser and scientific advisory committee will support and guide the research.

Members of the consultative forum are listed on the Family Study website at www.dva.gov.au/vvfs. Members are happy to help with any questions or concerns you may have about the Study.

What to expect

Participation in the Study will only require a few hours at different times over the coming years. It won't be onerous. Your main participation will be the completion of a comprehensive health questionnaire. A small number of participants may also be invited to participate in occasional focus groups and telephone discussions.

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