

Providing recovery support for wounded, injured and sick UK military personnel throughout the COVID-19 pandemic

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Military recovery support impacted by COVID-19

Health precautions implemented by the UK government to limit the spread of COVID-19 led to the closure of many well-being support services in 2020. This created a need to re-think how impactful recovery support courses could be provided.

One such service was that of the five-day Multi Activity Course (MAC) which was redesigned in accordance with national health guidelines to allow continued access for wounded, injured and sick military personnel. The Reduced Numbers Multi Activity Course (R-MAC) was developed and began in August 2020.

Theoretical & practical considerations of the R-MAC

It took much more than reducing the number of participants to create a safe, and impactful recovery support course during the pandemic.

Through a process of continuous discovery, focused on meeting the needs of participants, and to meet changing COVID-19 restrictions, the same ethos of the MAC was used to refine the R-MAC. This is to facilitate opportunities with participants through adaptive sport and adventurous activities to improve their competence, autonomy, relatedness and well-being.

Health coaching support, psycho-education and activity instruction is provided throughout the week by the same staff. Allowing for strong, meaningful working relationships to be developed with participants to help them, help themselves in their recovery journey.

Research Methods

Participants are invited to complete research surveys throughout the 5-day course as well as 2 weeks, 3, 6 and 12 months later.

Conclusion Following participation in the R-MAC, significant, sustainable positive changes in mental well-being were widely reported. These improvements in mental well-being were found to represent 'meaningful change' for the individuals (i.e. improvements of at least 3-8 in WEMWBS scores). The sustained meaningful improvements reported are a testament to the deliberate attention on 'transfer effects' within the R-MAC.

Considerations Course attendance is just one aspect of a participant's individual recovery process and many other events may positively influence their well-being after attending. Supporting attribution data that explores the reported positive behaviour change of the participants also endorses the conclusion that attendance on the R-MAC has played a positive part in improving participants mental well-being.

What did it mean to the participants to be able attend during the pandemic?

"This course saves lives, you may never be able to quantify how many, but it really helps and makes a difference." - 3 months

"This course has changed my life. Without it I may not have been here in a few months' time." - End of the course.

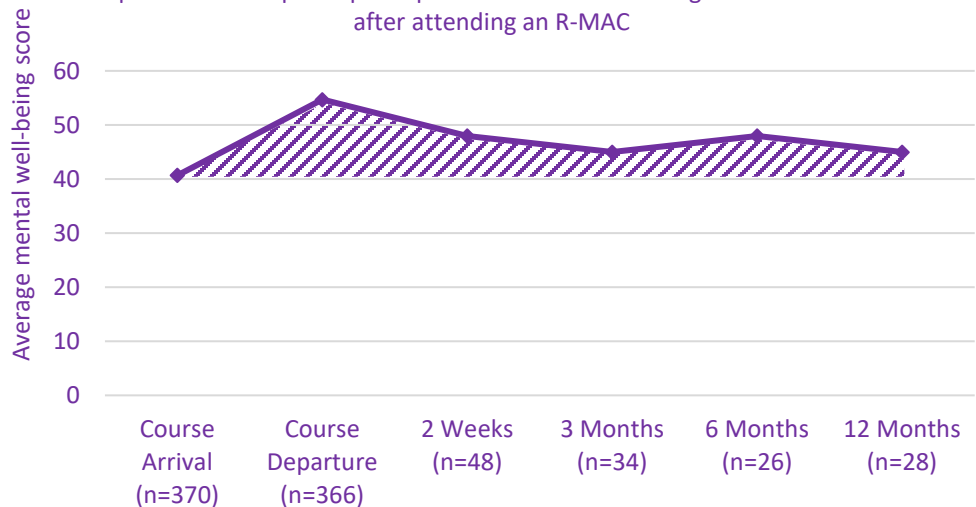
"Truly believe without Battle Back I may not be here today." - 2 weeks

"Since attending the course I have stopped suicidal thoughts" - 12 months

"This has been life changing for me, I am not 100% yet, I do feel that I have the [R]-MAC to remember and fall back on if I have difficult times." - 6 months

"It was the missing piece in the puzzle that I needed to help me reset and take that step forward into getting back out there" - 6 months

Improvements in participants positive mental well-being in the 12 months after attending an R-MAC



Contact & view more research

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