



The Hon Darren Chester MP

Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Minister for Defence Personnel

Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC

MEDIA RELEASE

5 December 2018

GOVERNMENT WELCOMES MEFLOQUINE REPORT

MINISTER for Veterans' Affairs and Minister for Defence Personnel Darren Chester today welcomed the report from the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee Inquiry into the use of the Quinoline anti-malarial drugs Mefloquine and Tafenoquine in the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

"The Government will carefully consider the recommendations of the Senate Inquiry Report and will provide a response in the new year," Mr Chester said.

"Following feedback from the ex-serving community, the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) recently hosted a series of mefloquine and tafenoquine consultation forums across Australia.

"The forums were an opportunity to hear from current and former serving members who were prescribed the anti-malarial drugs. Hearing from current and former serving members has helped DVA to better understand the needs of those who are seeking advice, support or access to treatment.

"The Government has listened to ADF members, veterans and their families and has put into place a number of actions to address their concerns, including a comprehensive online information resource along with establishing a dedicated team to assist with access to treatment and support."

Free and confidential services are provided 24/7 by *Open Arms - Veterans and Families Counselling*: call 1800 011 046 or visit www.OpenArms.gov.au. For serving members, health care support is available through their local Joint Health Command health facility.

DVA's designated phone line — 1800 MEFLOQUINE (1800 633 567) — also offers information and support for veterans and their families. For assistance and advice on the anti-malarial medications individuals may have taken in Defence, current and former serving members can visit the Defence Health Portal website, or email ADF.Malaria@defence.gov.au.

ENDS

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Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling, provides support for current and ex-serving ADF personnel and their families. Free and confidential help is available 24/7.

Phone 1800 011 046 (international: +61 1800 011 046 or +61 8 8241 4546) or visit www.OpenArms.gov.au