Aims
• Explore the acceptability of peer support for older veterans
• Develop service provision in the community

Rationale
– Likely to reflect on earlier life as we age (Life review and Reminiscence)
– Likely to reflect on experiences from when we were 18-30 years old (memory bump)
– Presence of unresolved trauma can cause difficulties in later life
– Difficulties in transition
– Sharing positive memories can reduce loneliness and isolation
– **Naturally occurring social support**:  
  – May have been lost due to changes in social resources
  – May support avoidance of difficult memories / negative coping strategies

Why Peer Support?
– A low intensity intervention to provide a listening ear and signposting
– Based on Homophily Theory: most likely to accept support from someone who has been through similar experiences
– Overseen and monitored to ensure peer support is appropriate and helpful

Method

Findings
• 2 organisations offering ‘peer support’
• Scarcity of research specifically for peer support for veterans (ongoing systematic review)
• Peer Support is appealing and preferred model is similar to existing, tested models from other contexts
• No need to establish a new organisation: Concentrate on improving existing models

Where next?
• Exploring opportunities to implement findings within a national organisation and local services.

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