

REVOKED

Amendment of Statement of Principles

concerning

OSTEOARTHRISIS

ICD CODES: 715.0, 715.1, 715.2, 715.3, 715.8

**Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986
subsection 196B(3)**

The Repatriation Medical Authority amends, under subsection 196B(3) of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (the Act), Instrument No.72 of 1995 (Statement of Principles concerning osteoarthritis, as amended by Instrument No.337 of 1995) by:

1. omitting from the heading of the Instrument the words and numbers, "ICD CODE: 715", and inserting in its place, "ICD CODES: 715.0, 715.1, 715.2, 715.3, 715.8";
2. omitting paragraphs 1(a) to 1(k) inclusive and replacing them with the following:
 - “(a) for generalised or localised osteoarthritis,
 - (i) contracting significant inflammatory joint disease in the relevant joint before the clinical onset of osteoarthritis; or
 - (b) for localised osteoarthritis only,
 - (i) suffering an intra-articular fracture of the relevant joint before the clinical onset of osteoarthritis; or
 - (ii) having a malalignment of the relevant joint for at least 10 years before the clinical onset of osteoarthritis; or
 - (iii) being obese for at least 20 years before the clinical onset of osteoarthritis in either knee joint; or

- (iv) suffering a depositional joint disease in the relevant joint before the clinical onset of osteoarthritis; or
- (v) suffering a trauma to the relevant joint which has resulted in permanent ligamentous instability before the clinical onset of osteoarthritis; or
- (vi) suffering a trauma to the relevant joint before the clinical onset of osteoarthritis; or
- (vii) for osteoarthritis of a weight bearing joint of the lower limb, being occupationally required to undertake continuous heavy physical activity for at least 15 years before the clinical onset of osteoarthritis; or
- (viii) for osteoarthritis of the wrist, elbow or metacarpophalangeal joint, being occupationally required to use a pneumatic drill, a jackhammer or similar pneumatic tool for at least 15 years before the clinical onset of osteoarthritis; or
- (ix) suffering a trauma to the relevant joint which has resulted in permanent ligamentous instability before the clinical worsening of osteoarthritis; or
- (x) suffering a trauma to the relevant joint before the clinical worsening of osteoarthritis; or
- (xi) for osteoarthritis of a weight bearing joint of the lower limb, being occupationally required to undertake continuous heavy physical activity for at least 15 years before the clinical worsening of osteoarthritis; or
- (xii) for osteoarthritis of the wrist, elbow or metacarpophalangeal joint, being occupationally required to use a pneumatic drill, a jackhammer or similar pneumatic tool for at least 15 years before the clinical worsening of osteoarthritis.”;

3. omitting paragraph 2 and inserting in its place the following:
 - “2. Subject to clause 3 (below) at least one of the factors set out in paragraphs **1(a) to 1(b)** must be related to any service rendered by a person.”;
4. omitting paragraph 3 and inserting in its place the following:
 - “3. The factors set out in subparagraphs **1(b)(ix) to 1(b)(xii)** apply only where:
 - (a) the person’s **osteoarthritis** was contracted before a period, or part of a period, of service to which the factor is related; and
 - (b) the relationship suggested between the **osteoarthritis** and the particular service of a person is a relationship set out in paragraph 8(1)(e), 9(1)(e) or 70(5)(d) of the Act.”;
5. omitting the definition of “osteoarthritis” in paragraph 4 and inserting in its place in paragraph 4, the following definition:

“**osteoarthritis**’ (generalised osteoarthritis, attracting ICD code 715.0 or localised osteoarthritis, attracting ICD code 715.1, 715.2, 715.3 or 715.8) means a heterogenous group of clinical joint disorders associated with defective integrity of the articular cartilage and related changes in the underlying bone and joint margins, and which has the following characteristics:

 - (a) a history of pain;
 - (b) impaired function;
 - (c) joint swelling; and
 - (d) stiffness;”;
6. omitting the definition of “trauma to the relevant joint” in paragraph 4 and inserting in its place in paragraph 4, the following definition:

“**trauma to the relevant joint**’ means a joint injury caused by the force of an extraneous physical or mechanical agent that causes the development, within 24 hours of the injury being sustained, of acute symptoms and signs of pain, swelling, tenderness, and altered mobility or range of movement of the joint, and where such acute symptoms and signs last for a period of at least ten days immediately after the injury occurs, unless medical intervention has occurred. Where medical intervention for the injury has occurred (eg splinting, corticosteroid injection, surgery),

and there is evidence relating to the extent of injury and treatment, such evidence may be considered;”.

The amendments made by this instrument apply to all matters to which Instrument No.72 of 1995 and section 120B of the Act apply.

Dated this *Third* day of *October* 1995

The Common Seal of the)
Repatriation Medical Authority)
was affixed to this instrument)
in the presence of)

KEN DONALD
CHAIRMAN