

# REVOKED

## Amendment of Statement of Principles

concerning

# OSTEOARTHRISIS

ICD CODE: 715

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) by:

1. inserting immediately after paragraph (f) of clause 1, the following:
  - “(fa) suffering a trauma to the relevant joint before the clinical onset of osteoarthritis; or
  - (fb) 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
  - (fc) 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”
2. omitting paragraph (g) of clause 1 and inserting in its place in clause 1 the following:
  - “(g) suffering a trauma to the relevant joint which has resulted in permanent ligamentous instability before the clinical worsening of osteoarthritis; or”;
3. inserting immediately after paragraph (g) of clause 1, the following:

- “(h) suffering a trauma to the relevant joint before the clinical worsening of osteoarthritis; or
- (j) 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
- (k) 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.”;

4. 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(k)** must be related to any service rendered by a person.”;

5. omitting paragraph 3 and inserting in its place the following:

“3. The factors set out in paragraphs **1(g) to 1(k)** 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.”;

6. inserting before the definition of “depositional joint disease” in paragraph 4 the following definition:

“**being occupationally required to undertake continuous heavy physical activity**’ means working in a job requiring continuous and repetitive flexion, extension or twisting of the affected joint, frequent carrying of loads of at least 35 kg, lifting of maximal loads in a twisted or bent position, or exposure to any combination of these activities on most days for a period of at least 15 years;”

7. omitting the definition of “osteoarthritis” in paragraph 4 and inserting in its place in paragraph 4, the following definition:

**“osteoarthritis”** means a heterogeneous group of clinical joint disorders, attracting ICD code 715, 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;”;

8. inserting after the definition of “osteoarthritis” in paragraph 4 the following definitions:

**“trauma to the relevant joint”** means injury caused by the force of an extraneous physical or mechanical agent that causes pain, swelling or tenderness of a joint affected by osteoarthritis within the 24 hours after the force has been applied;

**‘trauma to the relevant joint which has resulted in permanent ligamentous instability’** means abnormal mobility and instability of the joint due to ligamentous injury caused by the force of an extraneous physical or mechanical agent, and is characterised by the regular recurrence of episodes of pain and/or swelling of a joint affected by osteoarthritis;

**‘weight bearing joint of the lower limb’** means the hip joint, knee joint or ankle joint.”.

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 **Twenty-ninth** day of  
**August** 1995

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

KEN DONALD  
CHAIRMAN