

Statement of Principles

concerning

HEPATITIS C

ICD CODES: 070.41, 070.51

Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986
subsection 196B(2)

1. Being of the view that there is sound medical-scientific evidence that indicates that **hepatitis C and death from hepatitis C** can be related to operational service rendered by veterans, peacekeeping service rendered by members of Peacekeeping forces and hazardous service rendered by members of the Forces, the Repatriation Medical Authority determines, under subsection 196B(2) of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986*, that the factors that must as a minimum exist before it can be said that a reasonable hypothesis has been raised connecting **hepatitis C or death from hepatitis C** with the circumstances of that service, are:
 - (a) having received a blood transfusion or blood product injection or organ transplant, that was not screened for hepatitis C more than two weeks before the existence of the evidence of the hepatitis C infection; or
 - (b) having had an injection or dental procedure or surgical procedure (including tattooing) more than two weeks before the existence of the evidence of the hepatitis C infection, and for which the instruments were not sterilised; or
 - (c) having had a wound, laceration, or other injury or disease disrupting skin integrity that may have been contaminated by the body fluids of a person not shown to be hepatitis C negative, and that contamination having occurred more than two weeks before the existence of evidence of the hepatitis C infection; or

- (d) being a parenteral drug user and sharing needles more than two weeks before the existence of the evidence of the hepatitis C infection; or
 - (e) having had unprotected sexual intercourse with a person not proven to be negative for hepatitis C more than two weeks before the existence of the evidence of the hepatitis C infection; or
 - (f) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for hepatitis C.
2. Subject to clause 3 (below) at least one of the factors set out in paragraphs **1(a) to (f)**, must be related to any service rendered by a person.
3. The factor set out in paragraph **1(f)** applies only where:
- (a) the person's **hepatitis C** was contracted prior to a period, or part of a period, of service to which the factor is related; and
 - (b) the relationship suggested between the **hepatitis C** and the particular service of a person is a relationship set out in paragraph 8(1)(e), 9(1)(e), 70(5)(d), or 70(5A)(d) of the Act.
4. For the purposes of this Statement of Principles:

“blood product injection” means injection with a substance derived from human blood;

“body fluids” means blood, serum, serous discharge, saliva, tears, seminal fluid, bile or vaginal secretions;

“hepatitis C” means an infection with a positive strand ribonucleic acid (RNA) virus which results in antigens to hepatitis C and attracts an ICD code of 070.41 or 070.51;

“ICD code” means a number assigned to a particular kind of injury or disease in the tenth edition of the *International Classification of Diseases 9th Revision*, effective date of 1 October 1993, copyrighted by the US Commission on Professional and Hospital Activities, and having the Library of Congress number 77-94472;

“parenteral drug user” means a person who injects or causes to be injected addictive or recreational drugs into their body;

“sexual intercourse” means sexual intercourse in which there is an exchange of body fluids.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 1995

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

KEN DONALD
CHAIRMAN