



Australian Government
Repatriation Medical Authority

Statement of Principles
concerning

HEPATITIS A

No. 63 of 2015

for the purposes of the

Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986
and

Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004

Title

1. This Instrument may be cited as Statement of Principles concerning hepatitis A No. 63 of 2015.

Determination

2. The Repatriation Medical Authority under subsection **196B(2)** and **(8)** of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (the VEA):
 - (a) revokes Instrument No. 29 of 2007 concerning hepatitis A; and
 - (b) determines in its place this Statement of Principles.

Kind of injury, disease or death

3.
 - (a) This Statement of Principles is about **hepatitis A** and **death from hepatitis A**.
 - (b) For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, "**hepatitis A**" means a symptomatic, clinical illness due to infection with the hepatitis A virus. This infection is characterised by inflammation of the liver, commonly accompanied by fever, tiredness, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, abdominal discomfort and jaundice.
 - (c) Hepatitis A attracts ICD-10-AM code B15.
 - (d) In the application of this Statement of Principles, the definition of "**hepatitis A**" is that given at paragraph 3(b) above.

Basis for determining the factors

4. The Repatriation Medical Authority is of the view that there is sound medical-scientific evidence that indicates that **hepatitis A** and **death from hepatitis A** can be related to relevant service rendered by veterans, members of Peacekeeping Forces, or members of the Forces under the VEA, or members under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (the MRCA).

Factors that must be related to service

5. Subject to clause 7, at least one of the factors set out in clause 6 must be related to the relevant service rendered by the person.

Factors

6. The factor that must as a minimum exist before it can be said that a reasonable hypothesis has been raised connecting **hepatitis A** or **death from hepatitis A** with the circumstances of a person's relevant service is:
 - (a) being exposed to the hepatitis A virus between 15 and 50 days before the clinical onset of hepatitis A; or
 - (b) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for hepatitis A.

Factors that apply only to material contribution or aggravation

7. Paragraph **6(b)** applies only to material contribution to, or aggravation of, hepatitis A where the person's hepatitis A was suffered or contracted before or during (but not arising out of) the person's relevant service.

Inclusion of Statements of Principles

8. In this Statement of Principles if a relevant factor applies and that factor includes an injury or disease in respect of which there is a Statement of Principles then the factors in that last mentioned Statement of Principles apply in accordance with the terms of that Statement of Principles as in force from time to time.

Other definitions

9. For the purposes of this Statement of Principles:
"being exposed to the hepatitis A virus" means:
 - (a) being in the same household or immediate work environment as a person infected with the hepatitis A virus;
 - (b) consuming water or food contaminated with the hepatitis A virus;
 - (c) having direct contact with human or primate faecal material contaminated with the hepatitis A virus;
 - (d) having direct physical contact with a human or a primate infected with the hepatitis A virus;
 - (e) having percutaneous exposure to blood or body fluids contaminated with the hepatitis A virus; or
 - (f) receiving a transfusion of blood or blood products contaminated with the hepatitis A virus;

"death from hepatitis A" in relation to a person includes death from a terminal event or condition that was contributed to by the person's hepatitis A;

"ICD-10-AM code" means a number assigned to a particular kind of injury or disease in The International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, 10th Revision, Australian Modification (ICD-10-AM), Eighth Edition, effective date of 1 July 2013, copyrighted by the Independent Hospital Pricing Authority, and having ISBN 978-1-74128-213-9;

"relevant service" means:

- (a) operational service under the VEA;
- (b) peacekeeping service under the VEA;
- (c) hazardous service under the VEA;
- (d) British nuclear test defence service under the VEA;
- (e) warlike service under the MRCA; or
- (f) non-warlike service under the MRCA;

"terminal event" means the proximate or ultimate cause of death and includes:

- (a) pneumonia;
- (b) respiratory failure;
- (c) cardiac arrest;
- (d) circulatory failure; or
- (e) cessation of brain function.

Application

- 10.** This Instrument applies to all matters to which section 120A of the VEA or section 338 of the MRCA applies.

Date of effect

- 11.** This Instrument takes effect from 1 June 2015.

Dated this **first** day of **May** 2015

The Common Seal of the
Repatriation Medical Authority
was affixed at the direction of:)



PROFESSOR NICHOLAS SAUNDERS AO
CHAIRPERSON