

REVOKED

Statement of Principles

concerning

AORTIC ATHEROSCLEROTIC DISEASE

ICD CODES: 440.0, 441

Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986
subsection 196B(2)

1. Being of the view that there is sound medical-scientific evidence that indicates that **aortic atherosclerotic disease** and **death from aortic atherosclerotic disease** 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 **aortic atherosclerotic disease** or **death from aortic atherosclerotic disease** with the circumstances of that service, are:
 - (a) smoking at least five cigarettes per day or the equivalent thereof in other tobacco products, for at least three years before the clinical onset of aortic atherosclerotic disease; or
 - (b) suffering from hypertension before the clinical onset of aortic atherosclerotic disease; or
 - (c) suffering from dyslipidaemia before the clinical onset of aortic atherosclerotic disease; or
 - (d) suffering from diabetes mellitus before the clinical onset of aortic atherosclerotic disease; or
 - (e) smoking at least five cigarettes per day or the equivalent thereof in other tobacco products, for at least three years before the clinical worsening of aortic atherosclerotic disease; or

- (f) suffering from hypertension, which developed before the clinical worsening of aortic atherosclerotic disease; or
 - (g) suffering from dyslipidaemia, which developed before the clinical worsening of aortic atherosclerotic disease; or
 - (h) suffering from diabetes mellitus, which developed before the clinical worsening of aortic atherosclerotic disease; or
 - (j) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for aortic atherosclerotic disease.
2. Subject to clause 3 (below) at least one of the factors set out in paragraphs **1(a) to 1(j)** must be related to any service rendered by a person.
3. The factors set out in paragraphs **1(e) to 1(j)** apply only where:
- (a) the person's **aortic atherosclerotic disease** 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 **aortic atherosclerotic disease** and the particular service of the 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:

“aortic atherosclerotic disease” means the presence of atherosclerosis in the ascending, arching, or descending aorta (including the thoracic and abdominal aorta), attracting ICD code 440.0 or 441;

“atherosclerosis” means an intimal disease characterised by fibrous plaques;

NOTE: The atheromatous plaque is a raised, localised lesion within the intima that has a central core of lipid, which is mostly cholesterol esters complexed with proteins and an overlying tissue plate. Generalised and unspecified atherosclerosis attracts ICD code 440.9.

“diabetes mellitus” means an endocrine disease, attracting ICD code 250, that is characterised by a fasting venous plasma glucose concentration equal to or greater than 7.8 millimoles per litre on at least two separate occasions or a venous plasma glucose concentration equal to or greater than 11.1 millimoles per litre both within two hours and at two hours after ingestion of 75 grams of glucose;

“dyslipidaemia” generally means evidence of a persistently abnormal lipid profile after the accurate evaluation of serum lipids following a 12 hour overnight fast, and estimated on a minimum of two occasions as a:

- total serum cholesterol level greater than or equal to 5.5 mmol/L;
or
- fasting serum triglyceride level greater than or equal to 2.0 mmol/L together with high density lipoprotein cholesterol level less than 0.9 mmol/L;

Note: the source for this definition is: NHF Australia, Guide to Plasma Lipids for Doctors;
Current Therapeutics, Vol 33 Supplement 1, 1992.

“hypertension” means

- (a) a usual blood pressure reading where the systolic reading is persistently greater than or equal to 140 mmHg and/ or where the diastolic reading is greater than or equal to 90 mmHg; or
- (b) where treatment for hypertension is being administered;

and attracting ICD code in the range 401 to 405;

“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.

