

# REVOKED

## Statement of Principles

concerning

## REFRACTIVE ERROR

ICD CODES: 367.0 - 367.3, 367.9

Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986  
subsection 196B(2)

1. Being of the view that there is sound medical-scientific evidence that indicates that **refractive error** and **death from refractive error** 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* (the Act), that the factors that must as a minimum exist before it can be said that a reasonable hypothesis has been raised connecting **refractive error** or **death from refractive error** with the circumstances of that service, are:
  - (a) for hypermetropia, suffering aphakia in the affected eye immediately before the clinical onset of that refractive error; or
  - (b) for astigmatism, suffering corneal scarring in the affected eye immediately before the clinical onset of that refractive error; or
  - (c) for astigmatism, suffering a pterygium of the affected eye immediately before the clinical onset of that refractive error; or

- (d) for astigmatism, suffering a lid or limbal neoplasm of the affected eye immediately before the clinical onset of that refractive error; or
- (e) for anisometropia or aniseikonia, suffering unocular trauma which has permanently altered visual acuity immediately before the clinical onset of that refractive error; or
- (f) for anisometropia or aniseikonia, suffering unocular disease which has permanently altered visual acuity immediately before the clinical onset of that refractive error; or
- (g) for hypermetropia, suffering aphakia in the affected eye immediately before the clinical worsening of that refractive error; or
- (h) for astigmatism, suffering corneal scarring in the affected eye immediately before the clinical worsening of that refractive error; or
- (j) for astigmatism, suffering a pterygium of the affected eye immediately before the clinical worsening of that refractive error; or
- (k) for astigmatism, undergoing penetrating keratoplasty to the affected eye immediately before the clinical worsening of that refractive error; or
- (m) for astigmatism, suffering a lid or limbal neoplasm of the affected eye immediately before the clinical worsening of that refractive error; or
- (n) for anisometropia or aniseikonia, suffering unocular trauma which has permanently altered visual acuity immediately before the clinical worsening of that refractive error; or
- (o) for anisometropia or aniseikonia, suffering unocular disease which has permanently altered visual acuity immediately before the clinical worsening of that refractive error; or
- (p) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for refractive error.

2. Subject to clause 3 (below) at least one of the factors set out in paragraphs **1(a) to 1(p)** must be related to any service rendered by a person.

3. The factors set out in paragraphs **1(g) to 1(p)** apply only where:
- (a) the person's **refractive error** was suffered or contracted before a period, or part of a period, of service to which the factor is related; and
  - (b) the relationship suggested between the **refractive error** 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:

**“aphakia”** means the condition in which the lens of the eye is absent from or displaced within the dioptric system or has been surgically extracted, attracting ICD code 379.3;

**“aniseikonia”** means a disorder in which the image seen by one eye differs in size and shape from that seen by the other, attracting ICD code 367.32;

**“anisometropia”** means a condition in which each eye has a different refractive error, attracting ICD code 367.31;

**“astigmatism”** means the unequal curvature of the refractive surfaces of the eye, such that the refracting power is not the same in all directions and no two-dimensional object can be brought to focus on the retina, attracting ICD code 367.2;

**“corneal scarring”** means irreversible damage to the corneal epithelium due to chronic inflammatory diseases of the cornea, interstitial keratitis, corneal infection, trauma or surgery;

**“hypermetropia”** means a condition in which rays of light entering the eye parallel to the visual axis come to focus behind the retina in the unaccommodated eye, attracting ICD code 367.0;

**“ICD code”** means a number assigned to a particular kind of injury or disease in the Australian Version of The International Classification of Diseases, 9th revision, Clinical Modification (ICD-9-CM), effective date of 1 July 1995, copyrighted by the National Coding Centre, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Sydney, NSW, and having ISBN 0 642 22235 5;

**“lid or limbal neoplasm”** means a neoplasm of the eyelid or a neoplasm of the junction between the cornea and the conjunctiva, attracting ICD

code 171.0, 173.1, 190.3, 190.4, 198.2, 198.98, 215.0, 216.1, 224.3, 224.4, 232.1, 234.0, 238.1, 238.2, 238.8, 239.2, 239.8 or 258.1;

**“myopia”** means a condition in which rays of light entering the eye parallel to the visual axis come to focus in front of the retina in the unaccommodated eye, attracting ICD code 367.1;

**“penetrating keratoplasty”** means a procedure in which the entire thickness of the cornea is removed and replaced by donor tissue;

**“pterygium”** means a wing-like, abnormal triangular fold of membrane, in the interpalpebral fissure, extending from the conjunctiva to the cornea, being immovably united to the cornea at its apex, firmly attached to the sclera throughout its middle portion, and merged with the conjunctiva at its base, attracting ICD code 372.4;

**“refractive error”** means hypermetropia, myopia, astigmatism, anisometropia or aniseikonia, attracting an ICD code in the range 367.0 to 367.3, or 367.9;

**“uniocular disease”** means a disease process affecting only one eye;

**“uniocular trauma”** means physical trauma to only one eye and in this respect such trauma means an injury to the eye by the force of an extraneous physical or mechanical agent and includes surgery to the eye, attracting ICD code 871, 918 or 921.

Dated this *Eighteenth* day of *July*  
1995

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

KEN DONALD  
CHAIRMAN