

Revocation and Determination
of
Statement of Principles
concerning
OPEN-ANGLE GLAUCOMA

**ICD-9-CM CODES: 365.1, 365.3, 365.51, 365.52, 365.62, 365.63, 365.64,
365.65, 365.81, 365.82**

Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986

1. The Repatriation Medical Authority under subsection **196B(2)** of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (the Act):
 - (a) revokes Instrument No.241 of 1995; and
 - (b) determines in its place the following Statement of Principles.

Kind of injury, disease or death

2. (a) This Statement of Principles is about **open-angle glaucoma** and **death from open-angle glaucoma**.
 - (b) For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, "**open-angle glaucoma**", means glaucoma associated with an open iridocorneal angle, and includes both primary and secondary forms, attracting ICD-9-CM codes 365.1, 365.3, 365.51, 365.52, 365.62, 365.63, 365.64, 365.65, 365.81 or 365.82. This definition excludes congenital glaucomas.

Basis for determining the factors

3. The Repatriation Medical Authority is of the view that there is sound medical-scientific evidence that indicates that **open-angle glaucoma** and **death from open-angle glaucoma** can be related to relevant service rendered by veterans, members of Peacekeeping Forces, or members of the Forces.

Factors that must be related to service

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

Factors

5. The factors that must as a minimum exist before it can be said that a reasonable hypothesis has been raised connecting **open-angle glaucoma** or **death from open-angle glaucoma** with the circumstances of a person's relevant service are:
 - (a) suffering from exfoliation syndrome involving the affected eye at the time of the clinical onset of open-angle glaucoma; or
 - (b) for phacolytic glaucoma only, suffering from cataract of the affected eye at the time of the clinical onset of open-angle glaucoma; or
 - (c) for ghost cell glaucoma only, suffering vitreal haemorrhage, hyphema or intraocular surgery involving the affected eye before the clinical onset of open-angle glaucoma; or
 - (d) for pigmentary glaucoma only, suffering from pigment dispersion syndrome involving the affected eye before the clinical onset of open-angle glaucoma; or
 - (e) suffering from iridocorneal endothelial syndrome involving the affected eye at the time of the clinical onset of open-angle glaucoma; or
 - (f) for neovascular glaucoma only, suffering from a condition which may give rise to neovascularisation of the iridocorneal angle of the affected eye before the clinical onset of open-angle glaucoma; or
 - (g) suffering from a neoplasm which is either invading or shedding cells into the anterior chamber of the affected eye at the time of the clinical onset of open-angle glaucoma; or
 - (h) suffering from uveitis of the affected eye before the clinical onset of open-angle glaucoma; or
 - (j) suffering significant trauma to the affected eye before the clinical onset of open-angle glaucoma; or

- (k) having undergone penetrating keratoplasty or other intraocular surgery of the affected eye before the clinical onset of open-angle glaucoma; or
- (m) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for open-angle glaucoma.

Factors that apply only to material contribution or aggravation

- 6. Paragraph 5(m) applies only to material contribution to, or aggravation of, open-angle glaucoma where the person's open-angle glaucoma was suffered or contracted before or during (but not arising out of) the person's relevant service; paragraph 8(1)(e), 9(1)(e), 70(5)(d) or 70(5A)(d) of the Act refers.

Inclusion of Statements of Principles

- 7. 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.

Other definitions

- 8. For the purposes of this Statement of Principles:

“a condition which may give rise to neovascularisation of the iridocorneal angle” means one of the conditions set out below:

- 1. central retinal vein obstruction of the affected eye
- 2. diabetic retinopathy of the affected eye
- 3. ipsilateral carotid artery occlusive disease
- 4. retinal detachment of the affected eye
- 5. intraocular tumour of the affected eye
- 6. central retinal artery obstruction of the affected eye
- 7. radiotherapy involving the affected eye;

“death from open-angle glaucoma” in relation to a person includes death from a terminal event or condition that was contributed to by the person's open-angle glaucoma;

“exfoliation syndrome” means a syndrome associated with the presence of extensive exfoliation material in the anterior chamber of the eye;

“ghost cell glaucoma” means an open-angle glaucoma resulting from obstruction to aqueous outflow from degenerated red blood cells devoid of haemoglobin (ghost cells) in the aqueous;

“hyphema” means haemorrhage within the anterior chamber of the eye;

“ICD-9-CM 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 1996, copyrighted by the National Coding Centre, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Sydney, NSW, and having ISBN 0 642 24447 2;

“iridocorneal endothelial syndrome” means a syndrome in which there is characteristic abnormality of the corneal endothelium;

“neovascular glaucoma” means glaucoma resulting from neovascularisation of the iridocorneal angle;

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

“phacolytic glaucoma” means an open-angle glaucoma secondary to leakage of lens protein into the aqueous from a cataract;

“pigmentary glaucoma” means a form of open-angle glaucoma with evidence of pigment dispersion syndrome and a raised intraocular pressure over 21 mmHg;

“pigment dispersion syndrome” means a syndrome characterised by pigment darkening (dark brown to black) of the trabecular meshwork in association with radial, peripheral iris transillumination defects; where iris defects are not visible, increased pigmentation of the corneal endothelium and pigment deposition on the posterior, peripheral lens surface are present;

“relevant service” means:

- (a) operational service; or
- (b) peacekeeping service; or
- (c) hazardous service;

“significant trauma to the affected eye” means penetrating, blunt, chemical or radiation injury to the affected eye that results in intraocular inflammation, intraocular bleeding or other intraocular tissue disruption;

“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;

“**uveitis**” means inflammation of the vascular middle coat of the eye ball, comprising the iris, ciliary body and choroid.

Application

- 9. This instrument applies to all matters to which section 120A of the Act applies.

Dated this *Fourteenth* day of *January* 1999

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

KEN DONALD
CHAIRMAN