

REVOKED

Statement of Principles

concerning

HEPATITIS B

ICD CODE: 070.2, 070.3

Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986
subsection 196B(2)

1. Being of the view that there is sound medical-scientific evidence that indicates that **hepatitis B and death from hepatitis B** 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 B or death from hepatitis B** with the circumstances of that service, are:
 - (a) in relation to hepatitis B where there is evidence of recent infection:
 - (i) having received a blood transfusion or blood product injection or organ transplant, that was not screened for hepatitis B, within the six months immediately before the existence of the evidence of the recent infection; or
 - (ii) having had an injection, or dental procedure, or surgical procedure (including tattooing) within the six months immediately before the existence of the evidence of the recent infection and for which the instruments were not sterilised; or

- (iii) 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 B negative, and that contamination having occurred within the six months immediately before the existence of evidence of the recent hepatitis B infection; or
 - (iv) being a parenteral drug user and sharing needles within the six months immediately before the existence of the evidence of the recent hepatitis B infection; or
 - (v) having had unprotected sexual intercourse with a person not proven to be negative for hepatitis B within the six months immediately before the existence of the evidence of the recent hepatitis B infection; or
- (b) in relation to hepatitis B where there was evidence of non-recent infection:
- (i) having been a Prisoner of War of Japan during World War 2; or
 - (ii) having served in Burma, Thailand, Malaya or Singapore in World War 2; or
 - (iii) having received a blood transfusion or blood product injection or organ transplant more than four months before the existence of the evidence of non-recent hepatitis B infection and that procedure was not screened for hepatitis B; or
 - (iv) having had an injection or dental procedure or surgical procedure (including tattooing) more than four months before the existence of the evidence of the non-recent hepatitis B infection and for which the instruments were not sterilised; or
 - (v) 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 B negative, and that contamination occurred more than four months before the existence of evidence of non-recent hepatitis B infection; or

- (vi) being a parenteral drug user and sharing needles more than four months before the existence of the evidence of the recent hepatitis B infection; or
 - (vii) having had unprotected sexual intercourse with a person not proven to be negative for hepatitis B more than four months before the existence of the evidence of the non- recent hepatitis B infection; or
 - (c) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for hepatitis B.
2. Subject to clause 3 (below) at least one of the factors set out in subparagraphs **1(a)(i) to 1(a)(v), 1(b)(i) to 1(b)(vii) or paragraph 1(c)** must be related to any service rendered by a person.
 3. The factor set out in paragraph **1(c)** applies only where:
 - (a) the person’s **hepatitis B** 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 B** 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 the injection of material extracted from human blood;

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

“evidence of non-recent infection” means declining levels of IgM anti-HBc or the presence of IgG anti-HBc;

“evidence of recent infection” means rising levels of hepatitis B Surface antigen (HBsAg) or the presence of IgM antibody to hepatitis B core Antigen (IgM anti-HBc);

“hepatitis B” means infection with a partially double stranded deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) virus which results in antigens to hepatitis B, attracting ICD code 070.2 or 070.3;

“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

