

Determination
of
Statement of Principles
concerning
SPASMODIC TORTICOLLIS

ICD CODE: 333.83

Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986

1. This Statement of Principles is determined by the Repatriation Medical Authority under subsection **196B(2)** of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (the Act).

Kind of injury, disease or death

2. (a) This Statement of Principles is about **spasmodic torticollis** and **death from spasmodic torticollis**.

(b) For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, “**spasmodic torticollis**” means an acquired chronic focal dystonia, characterised by sustained or intermittent involuntary neck muscle contractions, causing repetitive movements or abnormal postures of the head, attracting ICD code 333.83.

The diagnosis is made in the absence of conditions which could account for the dystonia, such as:

- (i) a generalised or hemi-dystonia; or
- (ii) a neurological disorder; or
- (iii) a structural lesion of the brain or cervical cord; or
- (iv) local lesions of the cervical region; or
- (v) a drug induced tardive dystonia; or
- (vi) an acute post-traumatic dystonia.

A percentage of patients with spasmodic torticollis may have other focal or segmental (affecting adjacent parts) dystonias such as oral dystonia, mandibular dystonia, blepharospasm or dystonia affecting the neck and arm and/or a benign tremor.

Basis for determining the factors

3. The Repatriation Medical Authority is of the view that there is sound medical-scientific evidence that indicates that **spasmodic torticollis and death from spasmodic torticollis** 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, the factor set out in the paragraph in clause 5 must be related to any relevant service rendered by the person.

Factors

5. The factor that must as a minimum exist before it can be said that a reasonable hypothesis has been raised connecting **spasmodic torticollis** or **death from spasmodic torticollis** with the circumstances of a person's relevant service is:
 - (a) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for spasmodic torticollis.

Factors that apply only to material contribution or aggravation

6. Paragraph 5(a) applies only to material contribution to, or aggravation of, spasmodic torticollis where the person's spasmodic torticollis 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.

Other definitions

7. For the purposes of this Statement of Principles:

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

“relevant service” means:

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

Dated this **Second** day of **May** 1997

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

KEN DONALD
CHAIRMAN