



**Australian Government**  
**Repatriation Medical Authority**

**Statement of Principles**  
**concerning**  
**VON WILLEBRAND DISEASE**  
**(Reasonable Hypothesis)**  
**(No. 45 of 2023)**

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The Repatriation Medical Authority determines the following Statement of Principles under subsection 196B(2) of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986*.

Dated 24 April 2023.

The Common Seal of the  
Repatriation Medical Authority  
was affixed to this instrument  
at the direction of:

Professor Terence Campbell AM  
Chairperson

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**1 Name**

This is the Statement of Principles concerning *von Willebrand disease (Reasonable Hypothesis)* (No. 45 of 2023).

**2 Commencement**

This instrument commences on 23 May 2023.

**3 Authority**

This instrument is made under subsection 196B(2) of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986*.

**4 Repeal**

The Statement of Principles concerning von Willebrand's disease No. 41 of 2015 (Federal Register of Legislation No. F2015L00006) made under subsection 196B(2) of the VEA is repealed.

**5 Application**

This instrument applies to a claim to which section 120A of the VEA or section 338 of the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* applies.

**6 Definitions**

The terms defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary have the meaning given when used in this instrument.

**7 Kind of injury, disease or death to which this Statement of Principles relates**

- (1) This Statement of Principles is about von Willebrand disease and death from von Willebrand disease.

*Meaning of von Willebrand disease*

- (2) For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, von Willebrand disease:
- (a) means a genetic disorder of platelet function, which involves a deficiency or abnormality of the von Willebrand factor, resulting in an increased risk of bleeding; and
  - (b) excludes haemophilia and acquired von Willebrand syndrome.
- (3) While von Willebrand disease attracts ICD-10-AM code D68.0, in applying this Statement of Principles the meaning of von Willebrand disease is that given in subsection (2).
- (4) For subsection (3), a reference to an ICD-10-AM code is a reference to the code assigned to a particular kind of injury or disease in *The*

*International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, Tenth Revision, Australian Modification (ICD-10-AM), Tenth Edition, effective date of 1 July 2017, copyrighted by the Independent Hospital Pricing Authority, ISBN 978-1-76007-296-4.*

*Death from von Willebrand disease*

- (5) For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, von Willebrand disease, in relation to a person, includes death from a terminal event or condition that was contributed to by the person's von Willebrand disease.

Note: *terminal event* is defined in the Schedule 1 – Dictionary.

**8 Basis for determining the factors**

The Repatriation Medical Authority is of the view that there is sound medical-scientific evidence that indicates that von Willebrand disease and death from von Willebrand disease can be related to relevant service rendered by veterans, members of Peacekeeping Forces, or members of the Forces under the VEA, or members under the MRCA.

Note: *MRCA*, *relevant service* and *VEA* are defined in the Schedule 1 – Dictionary.

**9 Factors that must exist**

At least one of the following factors must as a minimum exist before it can be said that a reasonable hypothesis has been raised connecting von Willebrand disease or death from von Willebrand disease with the circumstances of a person's relevant service:

- (1) being pregnant within the 6 weeks before the clinical worsening of von Willebrand disease;
- (2) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for von Willebrand disease.

**10 Relationship to service**

- (1) The existence in a person of any factor referred to in section 9, must be related to the relevant service rendered by the person.
- (2) The factors set out in subsections 9(1) and 9(2) apply only to material contribution to, or aggravation of, von Willebrand disease where the person's von Willebrand disease was suffered or contracted before or during (but did not arise out of) the person's relevant service.

**11 Factors referring to an injury or disease covered by another Statement of Principles**

In this Statement of Principles:

- (1) if a factor referred to in section 9 applies in relation to a person; and

- (2) that factor refers to an injury or disease in respect of which a Statement of Principles has been determined under subsection 196B(2) of the VEA;

then the factors in that Statement of Principles apply in accordance with the terms of that Statement of Principles as in force from time to time.

# Schedule 1 - Dictionary

Note: See Section 6

## 1 Definitions

In this instrument:

**MRCA** means the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004*.

**relevant service** means:

- (a) operational service under the VEA;
- (b) peacekeeping service under the VEA;
- (c) hazardous service under the VEA;
- (d) British nuclear test defence service under the VEA;
- (e) warlike service under the MRCA; or
- (f) non-warlike service under the MRCA.

Note: **MRCA** and **VEA** are also defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

**terminal event** means the proximate or ultimate cause of death and includes the following:

- (a) pneumonia;
- (b) respiratory failure;
- (c) cardiac arrest;
- (d) circulatory failure; or
- (e) cessation of brain function.

**VEA** means the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986*.

**von Willebrand disease**—see subsection 7(2).