



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

**Statement of Principles**  
**concerning**  
**SCHEUERMANN'S DISEASE**  
**(Balance of Probabilities)**  
**(No. 76 of 2016)**

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The Repatriation Medical Authority determines the following Statement of Principles under subsection 196B(3) of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986*.

Dated 26 August 2016

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nicholas Saunders'.

Professor Nicholas Saunders AO  
Chairperson

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**1 Name**

This is the Statement of Principles concerning *Scheuermann's disease (Balance of Probabilities)* (No. 76 of 2016).

**2 Commencement**

This instrument commences on 26 September 2016.

**3 Authority**

This instrument is made under subsection 196B(3) of the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986*.

**4 Application**

This instrument applies to a claim to which section 120B of the VEA or section 339 of the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* applies.

**5 Definitions**

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

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

- (1) This Statement of Principles is about Scheuermann's disease and death from Scheuermann's disease.

*Meaning of Scheuermann's disease*

- (2) For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, Scheuermann's disease (also known as juvenile osteochondrosis of the spine) means:
- (a) a disease of children and adolescents involving necrosis and regeneration in the growth centres of the thoracic or thoracolumbar vertebrae. It is characterised by a rigid hyperkyphosis due to anterior wedging of at least 5° in one or more consecutive vertebrae. This condition may be accompanied by back pain and, in severe cases, respiratory or neurological complications; and
  - (b) excludes postural kyphosis.
- (3) While Scheuermann's disease attracts ICD-10-AM code M42.0, in applying this Statement of Principles the meaning of Scheuermann's 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), Ninth Edition, effective date of 1 July 2015, copyrighted by the Independent Hospital Pricing Authority, ISBN 978-1-76007-020-5.*

*Death from Scheuermann's disease*

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

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

**7 Basis for determining the factors**

On the sound medical-scientific evidence available, the Repatriation Medical Authority is of the view that it is more probable than not that Scheuermann's disease and death from Scheuermann's disease can be related to relevant service rendered by veterans or members of the Forces under the VEA, or members under the MRCA.

Note: *relevant service* is defined in the Schedule 1 – Dictionary.

**8 Factor that must exist**

The factor that must exist before it can be said that, on the balance of probabilities, Scheuermann's disease or death from Scheuermann's disease is connected with the circumstances of a person's relevant service is inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for Scheuermann's disease.

**9 Relationship to service**

The existence in a person of the factor referred to in section 8, applies only to material contribution to, or aggravation of, Scheuermann's disease where the person's Scheuermann's disease was suffered or contracted before or during (but did not arise out of) the person's relevant service.

# Schedule 1 - Dictionary

Note: See Section 5

## 1 Definitions

In this instrument:

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

**relevant service** means:

- (a) eligible war service (other than operational service) under the VEA;
- (b) defence service (other than hazardous service and British nuclear test defence service) under the VEA; or
- (c) peacetime service under the MRCA.

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

**Scheuermann's disease**—see subsection 6(2).

**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*.