



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

Rehabilitation & Entitlements Policy Group

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THE FOLLOWING RMA SOPs ARE TO TAKE EFFECT ON 13 NOVEMBER, 2013

New SOPs	Nil
Revocations & Replacements	Chronic solvent encephalopathy Malignant neoplasm of the pancreas Epilepsy Epileptic seizure Steatohepatitis
Amendments	Nil

NOTEWORTHY FEATURES

Changes to SOPs for DSM-5

- DSM-5, the 5th edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, was published this year. There are some significant changes from DSM-IV.
- RMA SOPs will be progressively updated to incorporate DSM-5 terminology and definitions.
- None of the SOPs for psychiatric conditions have been updated yet.
- A number of non-psychiatric SOPs have factors for psychiatric disorders, such as factors for alcohol dependence or alcohol abuse, or anxiety disorders.
- As those SOPs are updated, DSM-5 terminology and definitions will be incorporated in the new SOPs where necessary, e.g. alcohol use disorder is the DSM-5 equivalent of alcohol dependence or alcohol abuse.
- DSM-5 terminology and definitions have been included in the new SOPs for chronic solvent encephalopathy, epilepsy and epileptic seizure (although DSM-5 is not mentioned in those SOPs).
- The Commission guidelines for psychiatric compensation claims are currently under review. The favoured approach to handling the transition to DSM-5, is to request that psychiatrists

continue to provide DSM-IV diagnoses, but also provide separate DSM-5 diagnoses. Further information on this will be provided at a later date.

Chronic solvent encephalopathy

Revocation – 71 & 72 of '13
Replaces 39 and 40 of '05

- This SOP has been renamed. It was previously called solvent related chronic encephalopathy.
- There is a new definition, but the criteria are similar to the old definition and the SOP coverage hasn't substantially changed.
- The SOP covers occupational solvent exposure, such as deseal/reseal exposure, but it also covers the consequences of recreational inhalant use.

Malignant neoplasm of the pancreas

Revocation – 73 & 74 of '13
Replaces 45 and 46 of '05

- There are some changes to the smoking factors, with: an added requirement for a minimum latency (smoking must have commenced at least 5 yrs (RH)/ 10 yrs (BOP) before onset); and, an increase in the BOP smoking dose from 15 to 20 pack years.
- There are new RH only onset factors for ionising radiation and for having had cholelithiasis (gall stones) or a cholecystectomy (removal of gall bladder).

Epilepsy

Revocation – 75 & 76 of '13
Replaces 49 and 50 of '05

- The epilepsy SOP covers recurrent seizures, over time, due to an underlying disorder of the brain. The epileptic seizure SOP covers one off seizure events (which may be a single seizure or a number of seizures in one episode). Determining which of the two SOPs to apply can be difficult. The diagnostic protocols in CCPS research contain further advice.
- The head trauma (including surgery) factors have been reorganised to fit with the (recently issued) concussion and moderate to severe traumatic brain injury SOPs.
- There is a new factor for autoimmune disorders affecting the brain.
- Previous factors for Alzheimer's disease and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease have been replaced by a broader factor covering any type of dementia.
- The previous alcohol dependence or abuse onset factor has been changed to a dose of alcohol.
- There is a new factor covering a range of medical conditions in place of the previous multiple sclerosis factor.
- Coverage of reflex epilepsy has been moved from the epileptic seizure SOP to this SOP.
- There is a new RH only worsening factor concerning sleep apnoea and (inability to use) CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure).

Epileptic seizure

Revocation – 77 & 78 of '13
Replaces 47 and 48 of '05
As amended by 37 & 38 of '09

- There is a new factor covering dehydration, heat stroke, sleep deprivation or strenuous exercise.
- There is a new factor covering various diving activities and also hyperbaric oxygen therapy.

- Other new or expanded factors concern: alcohol intoxication; neurotoxic substances, heavy metal poisoning; animal envenomation; a list of medical conditions; idiosyncratic drug reactions; autoimmune disorders; organ or stem cell transplants; and dementia.

Steatohepatitis**Revocation – 79 & 80 of '13**

Replaces 55 and 56 of '05

- The usual obesity factor has been retained, but there is also a new weight gain factor concerning minimum waist circumference.
- The previous hypertriglyceridaemia factor has been expanded to cover dyslipidaemia.
- The required levels of alcohol consumption have been reduced.
- There are new onset factors for lipodystrophy (RH and BOP) and hypertension (RH only).

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