



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

Rehabilitation & Entitlements Policy Group

SOP Bulletin No. 188

22 March 2016

THE FOLLOWING RMA SOPS ARE TO TAKE EFFECT ON 4 APRIL, 2016

New SOPs	Lyme disease
Revocations & Replacements	Non-melanotic malignant neoplasm of the skin Myopia, hypermetropia and astigmatism Malignant neoplasm of the endometrium Eating disorder Diverticular disease of the colon Benign prostatic hyperplasia Polymyalgia rheumatica Systemic lupus erythematosus Adjustment disorder
Amendments	Diabetes mellitus Depressive disorder Aplastic anaemia Acute myeloid leukaemia Myelodysplastic syndrome Acute lymphoblastic leukaemia Chronic lymphocytic leukaemia/small lymphocytic lymphoma Myeloma Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma

NOTEWORTHY FEATURES

Lyme disease

New - 25 & 26 of '16

- This new SOP covers a clinical illness caused by infection with specific species of *Borrelia* bacteria. The illness is acquired from a tick bite.
- Only some species of ticks carry the *Borrelia* bacteria known to cause Lyme disease. These ticks are found in temperate forested areas in Asia, Europe and North America.
- Whether "Lyme disease" or "Lyme-like disease" can be acquired from a tick bite in Australia is an area of controversy. Neither the specific *Borrelia* species nor the types of ticks that carry the bacteria have been confirmed to be present in Australia. There may be other bacteria carried by Australian ticks which may cause an infection which is similar to Lyme disease. This is unconfirmed and active research in this area is being undertaken.
- The SOP covers only the classic form of internationally-acquired Lyme disease. Infection needs to be confirmed by an accredited laboratory.
- Neither "Lyme-like disease" nor Australian acquired "Lyme disease" is covered by a SOP. There is no established way to confirm such a diagnosis and any claims received for such a condition will present difficulties as to whether there is a particular disease or injury present for the purposes of the VEA or the MRCA.

Non-melanotic malignant neoplasm of the skin

Revocation - 7 & 8 of '16

Replaces 81 and 82 of '07

- The (redundant) solar UV exposure ratio factor has been removed.
- There are new onset factors for:
 - use of a UV tanning device;
 - sunburn (BOP - for BCC only);
 - therapeutic radiation (BOP - for BCC only);
 - immune-mediated inflammatory diseases;
 - chronic lymphocytic leukaemia/small lymphocytic lymphoma (added to the non-Hodgkin's lymphoma factor);
 - SCC of the skin only for:
 - chronic lymphoedema;
 - being treated with a BRAF inhibitor or voriconazole;
 - using a hydrochlorothiazide diuretic; and
 - hidradenitis suppurativa;
 - SCC of the lip only, for:

- passive smoking (RH only);
- oral tobacco use (RH only); and
- alcohol (RH only);
- Merkel cell carcinoma only for:
 - being infected with Merkel cell polyomavirus.
- Factors have been removed from the BOP SOP for:
 - Paraquat; and
 - Mustard gas.

Myopia, hypermetropia and astigmatism

Revocation - 9 & 10 of '16
Replaces 69 and 70 of '07

- There has been some reorganisation / regrouping of factors, but otherwise there are few changes.
- Cortical cataract has been added as a new RH only factor for hypermetropia and astigmatism.

Malignant neoplasm of the endometrium

Revocation - 11 & 12 of '16
Replaces 99 and 100 of '07

- The definition now includes carcinosarcoma of the endometrium.
- Factors previously restricted to adenocarcinoma only now apply generally.
- There are new factors for:
 - oestrogen-secreting ovarian tumour;
 - diabetes; and
 - cessation of smoking.
- The previous therapeutic radiation factor has been replaced by one for ionising radiation, which applies to carcinosarcoma only.

Eating disorder

Revocation - 13 & 14 of '16
Replaces 47 and 48 of '08

- The diagnoses covered by this SOP have been updated to reflect changes from DSM-IV to DSM-5 and now include binge eating disorder.
- In the BOP SOP the previous category 2 stressor factor has been replaced by one restricted to "being the subject of weight-based bullying".
- There is a new RH only factor for being treated with topiramate.

- The previous factor for a specified psychiatric condition has been changed to one for a specified disorder of mental health, with an associated new definition.

Diverticular disease of the colon

Revocation - 15 & 16 of '16

Replaces 13 and 14 of '08

- The definition now specifies that the complications of diverticular: bleeding; perforation; abscess; and fistula, are covered by the SOP. There are factors that relate to those complications.
- There are new factors for:
 - Smoking;
 - Being overweight;
 - Inability to undertake physical activity;
 - Red meat consumption;
 - Alcohol;
 - NSAIDs for onset with complications (previously worsening only);
 - Antiplatelet agents (for diverticular bleeding only);
 - For worsening only for:
 - Opioid drugs;
 - Immunosuppressive drugs;
 - Inhaled glucocorticoids (previously systemic only);
 - Organ or bone marrow transplant; and
 - Chronic kidney disease.

Benign prostatic hyperplasia

Revocation - 17 & 18 of '16

Replaces 19 and 20 of '08

- There are no material changes.

Polymyalgia rheumatica

Revocation - 19 & 20 of '16

Replaces 23 and 24 of '08

- There are no material changes.

Systemic lupus erythematosus**Revocation - 21 & 22 of '16**
Replaces 85 and 86 of '07

- There are new worsening only factors for symptomatic infections and being pregnant.
- A previous worsening only factor for hormone replacement therapy has been changed to an onset factor in the RH SOP and removed from the BOP SOP.

Adjustment disorder**Revocation - 23 & 24 of '16**
Replaces 37 and 38 of '08

- There are minor changes to the definition which is now derived from DSM-5 (previously DSM-IV).
- There are new factors for:
 - living or working in a hostile or life-threatening environment (RH only);
 - vicarious trauma - being exposed to repeated or extreme aversive details of severe traumatic events;
 - having a severe, chronic medical condition.
- There are minor wording changes to the factors/definitions for life threatening illness or injury and chronic/persistent pain.

Diabetes mellitus**Amendment - 27 & 28 of '16**
Amends 89 and 90 of '11

- There are changes to the smoking factors with reduced doses and the addition of a passive smoking factor in the BOP SOP.
- There are changes to the orchiectomy and antiandrogen factors (given as treatment for prostate cancer).

Depressive disorder**Amendment - 29 & 30 of '16**
Amends 83 and 84 of '15

- The amendment is to the definition that accompanies the severe, chronic medical condition factor, which now has more detail.

SOPs with benzene factors

Aplastic anaemia	Amendment - 31 & 32 of '16 Amends 50 and 51 of '12
Acute myeloid leukaemia	Amendment - 33 & 34 of '16 Amends 71 and 72 of '15
Myelodysplastic syndrome	Amendment - 35 & 36 of '16 Amends 73 and 74 of '15
Acute lymphoblastic leukaemia	Amendment - 37 of '16 Amends 75 of '12
Chronic lymphocytic leukaemia / small lymphocytic lymphoma	Amendment - 38 of '16 Amends 109 of '07
Myeloma	Amendment - 39 of '16 Amends 69 of '12
Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma	Amendment - 40 of '16 Amends 28 of '10

- The RMA has reviewed all SOPs with benzene exposure factors. With the exception of aplastic anaemia, the SOPs now have two benzene factors, which have the same format in each SOP. The first is based on hours of exposure. It has an associated standard definition (for exposure to liquids containing benzene or to benzene vapour), with resultant reduced exposure requirements in some of the SOPs. The second factor is for cumulative exposure to benzene vapour, measured in ppm-years.
- Benzene exposure is an RH only factor in four of the SOPs listed above. Hence the amendment is to the RH SOP only.
- Aplastic anaemia is the only non-neoplasm in the above list. This condition is associated with shorter term but more intense benzene exposure that is more closely temporally linked to the disease.

Contact for this bulletin:

Dr Jon Kelley

x48412