



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Veterans' Affairs**

**Policy Development Branch**

# SOP Bulletin No. 236

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**THE FOLLOWING RMA SOPS TAKE EFFECT ON 23 MAY 2023**

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>New conditions</b>                 | <b>Plantar fibromatosis</b><br><b>Retinal burn</b>  |
| <b>Revocations &amp; Replacements</b> | <b>Decompression illness</b> (replaces decompression sickness)<br><b>Shingles and postherpetic neuralgia</b> (replaces Herpes zoster)<br><b>Chickenpox</b><br><b>Albinism</b><br><b>Alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency</b><br><b>Autosomal dominant polycystic kidney disease</b><br><b>Gaucher disease</b><br><b>Haemophilia</b><br><b>Hereditary spherocytosis</b><br><b>Multiple osteochondromatosis</b><br><b>von Willebrand disease</b><br><b>Wilson disease</b><br><b>Huntington disease</b> (replaces Huntington's chorea)<br><b>Marfan syndrome</b><br><b>Osteogenesis imperfecta</b><br><b>Melioidosis</b><br><b>Chronic myeloid leukaemia</b> |
| <b>Amendments</b>                     | <b>External burn</b>  |

## NOTEWORTHY FEATURES

### Plantar fibromatosis

**New – 21 & 22 of 2023**

- This new SOP covers a rare, chronic disease of the plantar fascia of the foot, which is similar to Dupuytren's disease in the hand. Fibrous nodule and cord formation in the fascia leads to puckering and thickening of the skin on the underside of the foot. Contractures may form. It is a separate disease from plantar fasciitis.
- SOP factors include: alcohol; diabetes; and for RH only, epilepsy; specified drugs; and trauma.

### Retinal burn

**New – 25 & 26 of 2023**

- This new SOP covers a (permanent) burn injury to the retina of the eye caused by intense light.
- Retinal burn was previously covered by the SOP for external burn. That SOP still applies if there is a burn to external parts of the eye.
- Factors covered include: non-therapeutic, high energy lasers; arc welding light (without adequate protection); and looking directly at the sun.

### Decompression illness

**Revocation – 23 & 24 of 2023**

Replaces 13 & 14 of 2015

- The name of the SOP has been changed, from decompression sickness. SOP coverage now includes arterial gas embolism (other than that due to pulmonary barotrauma and not including air embolism).
- The sole onset factor for an episode of decompression has been heavily revised, with additional scenarios and detail added.

**Shingles and postherpetic neuralgia****Revocation – 27 & 28 of 2023**

Replaces 47 &amp; 48 of 2015

- The name of the SOP has been changed, from Herpes zoster.
- The SOP now explicitly covers postherpetic neuralgia. There is a subtle further change to the definition to allow that a vesicular eruption, while usual with shingles, is not essential.
- There are new RH and BOP factors for: being prevented from accessing varicella-zoster vaccination; and autoimmune disorders.
- There are new RH only factors for: depression; specified respiratory and vascular conditions; moderate to severe traumatic brain injury; splenectomy; and symptomatic COVID infection.

**Chickenpox****Revocation – 29 & 30 of 2023**

Replaces 87 &amp; 88 of 2015

- The definition has been reformatted, with some additional information added, but SOP coverage is unchanged.
- There is one new onset factor (RH and BOP) for being prevented from accessing appropriate varicella-zoster vaccination in accordance with contemporary medical standards.
- There is one new worsening factor (RH and BOP) for being pregnant.

**Hereditary conditions****Revocations – 31 to 54 of 2023****Albinism****Alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency****Autosomal dominant polycystic kidney disease****Gaucher disease****Haemophilia****Hereditary spherocytosis****Multiple osteochondromatosis****von Willebrand disease****Wilson disease****Huntington disease****Marfan syndrome**

## Osteogenesis imperfecta

- All of these SOPs cover hereditary/genetic conditions.
- They have had the usual formatting updates and redrafting of definitions. Those that are named after individuals have had the “’s” removed from the name, in keeping with current RMA practice.
- None of these SOPs have onset factors. Some have only an “inability to obtain appropriate clinical management” worsening factor. Some have one or two other worsening factors.
- For most there have been no substantial changes made.
- Specific individual changes are:
  - Wilson disease – there is a new worsening factor for being pregnant;
  - Huntington disease – a name change – it was Huntington’s chorea.

### Melioidosis

**Revocation – 55 & 56 of 2023**

Replaces 60 & 61 of 2014

- The definition has been updated to the current format but SOP coverage is unchanged.
- The factor covering specified medical conditions now includes some additional conditions (cirrhosis; and other chronic lung conditions in addition to COPD).
- Worsening factors (apart from inability to obtain appropriate clinical management) have been removed.

### Chronic myeloid leukaemia

**Revocation – 57 & 58 of 2023**

Replaces 47 & 48 of 2014, as amended

- The definition has been reformatted, with additional information on excluded conditions and clinical presentation, but the SOP coverage is unchanged.
- The previous RH and BOP smoking factors have been removed.
- There are new RH only factors for: obesity; benzene exposure; and kidney transplantation.

**External burn****Amendment – 59 & 60 of 2023**

Amends 110 &amp; 111 of 2015, as amended

- The amendment is to the definition and stems from the determination of the new, separate SOP for retinal burn.
- The SOP previously covered “burns of the eye”. It now covers “burn to the conjunctiva or cornea, and eye burn that simultaneously affects the internal and external parts of the eye”, but excludes “isolated retinal burn of the eye”.

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