



Australian Government
Repatriation Medical Authority

Statement of Principles
concerning
FEMALE SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION
(Reasonable Hypothesis)
(No. 95 of 2016)

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

Dated 28 October 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 'N. Saunders'.

Professor Nicholas Saunders AO
Chairperson

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1 Name

This is the Statement of Principles concerning *female sexual dysfunction (Reasonable Hypothesis)* (No. 95 of 2016).

2 Commencement

This instrument commences on 28 November 2016.

3 Authority

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

4 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.

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 female sexual dysfunction and death from female sexual dysfunction.

Meaning of female sexual dysfunction

- (2) For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, female sexual dysfunction means:
 - (a) a clinically significant problem occurring during the female sexual response cycle that prevents the individual from experiencing satisfaction from sexual activity, where the problem has persisted for at least six months; and
 - (b) includes female sexual interest/arousal disorder, genito-pelvic pain/penetration disorder and female orgasmic disorder; and
 - (c) excludes hyperactive sexual desire disorder and persistent genital arousal disorder.

Note: *female orgasmic disorder*, *female sexual interest/arousal disorder* and *genito-pelvic pain/penetration disorder* are defined in the Schedule 1 – Dictionary.

Death from female sexual dysfunction

- (3) For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, female sexual dysfunction, in relation to a person, includes death from a terminal

event or condition that was contributed to by the person's female sexual dysfunction.

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

7 **Basis for determining the factors**

The Repatriation Medical Authority is of the view that there is sound medical-scientific evidence that indicates that female sexual dysfunction and death from female sexual dysfunction 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: *relevant service* is defined in the Schedule 1 – Dictionary.

8 **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 female sexual dysfunction or death from female sexual dysfunction with the circumstances of a person's relevant service:

- (1) having a genitourinary condition from the specified list of genitourinary conditions at the time of the clinical onset of female sexual dysfunction;

Note: *specified list of genitourinary conditions* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

- (2) having chronic renal failure at the time of the clinical onset of female sexual dysfunction;

Note: *chronic renal failure* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

- (3) having a haematological or solid organ cancer before the clinical onset of female sexual dysfunction;

- (4) undergoing a course of therapeutic radiation for cancer, where the lower abdomen, pelvis or perineal region was in the field of radiation, before the clinical onset of female sexual dysfunction;

- (5) having an endocrine disorder from the specified list of endocrine disorders at the time of the clinical onset of female sexual dysfunction;

Note: *specified list of endocrine disorders* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

- (6) having a neurological disorder from the specified list of neurological disorders at the time of the clinical onset of female sexual dysfunction;

Note: *specified list of neurological disorders* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

- (7) having a severe, chronic medical condition at the time of the clinical onset of female sexual dysfunction;

Note: *severe, chronic medical condition* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

- (8) having persistent pain of at least three months duration at the time of the clinical onset of female sexual dysfunction;
Note: *persistent pain* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.
- (9) being obese at the time of the clinical onset of female sexual dysfunction;
Note: *being obese* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.
- (10) experiencing blunt or penetrating trauma to the vulva, vagina, perineum or pelvis, including surgical trauma and traumatic childbirth, within the three months before the clinical onset of female sexual dysfunction;
- (11) having undergone menopause before the clinical onset of female sexual dysfunction;
Note: *menopause* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.
- (12) having a clinically significant disorder of mental health as specified at the time of the clinical onset of female sexual dysfunction;
Note: *clinically significant disorder of mental health as specified* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.
- (13) experiencing a category 1A stressor within the five years before the clinical onset of female sexual dysfunction;
Note: *category 1A stressor* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.
- (14) experiencing a category 1B stressor within the five years before the clinical onset of female sexual dysfunction;
Note: *category 1B stressor* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.
- (15) being the victim of severe childhood abuse before the clinical onset of female sexual dysfunction;
Note: *severe childhood abuse* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.
- (16) an inability to undertake any physical activity greater than three METs for at least the one year before the clinical onset of female sexual dysfunction;
Note: *MET* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.
- (17) taking a drug or a drug from a class of drugs from the specified list of drugs, within the 30 days before the clinical onset of female sexual dysfunction;
Note: *specified list of drugs* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.
- (18) having a genitourinary condition from the specified list of genitourinary conditions at the time of the clinical worsening of female sexual dysfunction;
Note: *specified list of genitourinary conditions* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

- (19) having chronic renal failure at the time of the clinical worsening of female sexual dysfunction;
Note: *chronic renal failure* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.
- (20) having a haematological or solid organ cancer before the clinical worsening of female sexual dysfunction;
- (21) undergoing a course of therapeutic radiation for cancer, where the lower abdomen, pelvis or perineal region was in the field of radiation, before the clinical worsening of female sexual dysfunction;
- (22) having an endocrine disorder from the specified list of endocrine disorders at the time of the clinical worsening of female sexual dysfunction;
Note: *specified list of endocrine disorders* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.
- (23) having a neurological disorder from the specified list of neurological disorders at the time of the clinical worsening of female sexual dysfunction;
Note: *specified list of neurological disorders* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.
- (24) having a severe, chronic medical condition at the time of the clinical worsening of female sexual dysfunction;
Note: *severe, chronic medical condition* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.
- (25) having persistent pain of at least three months duration at the time of the clinical worsening of female sexual dysfunction;
Note: *persistent pain* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.
- (26) being obese at the time of the clinical worsening of female sexual dysfunction;
Note: *being obese* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.
- (27) experiencing blunt or penetrating trauma to the vulva, vagina, perineum or pelvis, including surgical trauma and traumatic childbirth, within the three months before the clinical worsening of female sexual dysfunction;
- (28) having undergone menopause before the clinical worsening of female sexual dysfunction;
Note: *menopause* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.
- (29) having a clinically significant disorder of mental health as specified at the time of the clinical worsening of female sexual dysfunction;
Note: *clinically significant disorder of mental health as specified* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

- (30) experiencing a category 1A stressor within the five years before the clinical worsening of female sexual dysfunction;

Note: *category 1A stressor* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

- (31) experiencing a category 1B stressor within the five years before the clinical worsening of female sexual dysfunction;

Note: *category 1B stressor* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

- (32) being the victim of severe childhood abuse before the clinical worsening of female sexual dysfunction;

Note: *severe childhood abuse* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

- (33) an inability to undertake any physical activity greater than three METs for at least the one year before the clinical worsening of female sexual dysfunction;

Note: *MET* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

- (34) taking a drug or a drug from a class of drugs from the specified list of drugs, within the 30 days before the clinical worsening of female sexual dysfunction;

Note: *specified list of drugs* is defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

- (35) inability to obtain appropriate clinical management for female sexual dysfunction.

9 Relationship to service

- (1) The existence in a person of any factor referred to in section 8, must be related to the relevant service rendered by the person.
- (2) The factors set out in subsections 8(18) to 8(35) apply only to material contribution to, or aggravation of, female sexual dysfunction where the person's female sexual dysfunction was suffered or contracted before or during (but did not arise out of) the person's relevant service.

10 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 8 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 5

1 Definitions

In this instrument:

being obese means having a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 30 or greater.

BMI means W/H^2 where:

W is the person's weight in kilograms; and

H is the person's height in metres.

category 1A stressor means one of the following severe traumatic events:

- (a) experiencing a life-threatening event;
- (b) being subject to a serious physical attack or assault including rape and sexual molestation; or
- (c) being threatened with a weapon, being held captive, being kidnapped, or being tortured.

category 1B stressor means one of the following severe traumatic events:

- (a) being an eyewitness to a person being killed or critically injured;
- (b) viewing corpses or critically injured casualties as an eyewitness;
- (c) being an eyewitness to atrocities inflicted on another person or persons;
- (d) killing or maiming a person; or
- (e) being an eyewitness to or participating in, the clearance of critically injured casualties.

Note: *eyewitness* is also defined in the Schedule 1 - Dictionary.

chronic renal failure means:

- (a) having a glomerular filtration rate of less than 15 mL/min/1.73 m² for a period of at least three months; or
- (b) a need for renal replacement therapy (dialysis or transplantation) for treatment of complications of decreased glomerular filtration rate which would otherwise increase the risk of morbidity and mortality; or
- (c) undergoing chronic dialysis.

clinically significant disorder of mental health as specified means one of the following conditions, which is of sufficient severity to warrant ongoing management, which may involve regular visits (for example, at least monthly) to a psychiatrist, counsellor or general practitioner:

- (a) alcohol use disorder;
- (b) eating disorder;
- (c) depressive disorder;
- (d) obsessive-compulsive disorder;
- (e) panic disorder;
- (f) posttraumatic stress disorder;
- (g) schizophrenia; or

- (h) substance use disorder.

eyewitness means a person who observes an incident first hand and can give direct evidence of it. This excludes a person exposed only to media coverage of the incident.

female orgasmic disorder means the presence of either of the following symptoms which are experienced on almost all or all occasions of sexual activity:

- (a) marked delay in, marked infrequency of, or absence of orgasm; or
- (b) markedly reduced intensity of orgasmic sensations.

female sexual dysfunction—see subsection 6(2).

female sexual interest/arousal disorder means lack of, or significantly reduced, sexual interest/arousal, as manifested by at least three of the following:

- (a) absent or reduced interest in sexual activity;
- (b) absent or reduced sexual or erotic thoughts or fantasies;
- (c) no or reduced initiation of sexual activity, and typically unresponsive to a partner's attempts to initiate;
- (d) absent or reduced sexual excitement or pleasure during sexual activity in almost all or all sexual encounters;
- (e) absent or reduced sexual interest or arousal in response to any internal or external sexual/erotic cues (for example, written, verbal, visual); or
- (f) absent or reduced genital or non-genital sensations during sexual activity in almost all or all sexual encounters.

genito-pelvic pain/penetration disorder means persistent or recurrent difficulties with one or more of the following:

- (a) vaginal penetration during intercourse;
- (b) marked vulvovaginal or pelvic pain during vaginal intercourse or penetration attempts;
- (c) marked fear or anxiety about vulvovaginal or pelvic pain in anticipation of, during, or as a result of vaginal penetration; or
- (d) marked tensing or tightening of the pelvic floor muscles during attempted vaginal penetration.

menopause means the end of menstruation, defined as more than 12 months since the final menstrual period.

MET means a unit of measurement of the level of physical exertion. 1 MET = 3.5 ml of oxygen/kg of body weight per minute, 1.0 kcal/kg of body weight per hour or resting metabolic rate.

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

persistent pain means:

- (a) continuous; or
- (b) almost continuous; or
- (c) frequent, severe, intermittent pain;

which may or may not be ameliorated by analgesic medication and is of a level to cause interference with usual work or leisure activities or activities of daily living.

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.

severe childhood abuse means:

- (a) serious physical, emotional, psychological or sexual harm whilst a child aged under 16 years; or
- (b) neglect involving a serious failure to provide the necessities for health, physical and emotional development, or wellbeing whilst a child aged under 16 years;

where such serious harm or neglect has been perpetrated by a parent, a care provider, an adult who works with or around that child, or any other adult in contact with that child.

severe, chronic medical condition means an illness which substantially impacts on social, occupational or other important areas of functioning; and requires on-going daily or almost daily management of symptoms. This management may include, but is not limited to, assistance with activities of daily living; bed rest; dietary modification; drug therapy; nursing care; oxygen therapy or physiotherapy. This management must be supervised by a registered health practitioner.

Severe, chronic medical conditions do not usually resolve spontaneously, are rarely cured completely and may progress to life threatening illnesses. Examples of these conditions include poorly controlled asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, poorly controlled diabetes mellitus, inflammatory bowel disease, pemphigus, psoriasis and rheumatoid arthritis.

specified list of drugs means:

- (a) antiepileptics;
- (b) antipsychotics;
- (c) aromatase inhibitors;
- (d) beta blockers;
- (e) irreversible monoamine oxidase inhibitors;
- (f) selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors;
- (g) serotonin and noradrenaline (norepinephrine) reuptake inhibitors; or

(h) tricyclic antidepressants.

specified list of endocrine disorders means:

- (a) adrenal insufficiency;
- (b) Cushing's syndrome;
- (c) diabetes mellitus;
- (d) Hashimoto's disease with hypothyroidism;
- (e) hyperprolactinaemia;
- (f) hypogonadism;
- (g) hypopituitarism; or
- (h) hypothyroidism.

specified list of genitourinary conditions means:

- (a) endometriosis;
- (b) interstitial cystitis/bladder pain syndrome;
- (c) Sjogren's syndrome involving the vagina;
- (d) urinary incontinence;
- (e) uterine fibroids;
- (f) uterine prolapse; or
- (g) other genitourinary condition of sufficient severity to warrant ongoing management by a medical practitioner.

specified list of neurological disorders means:

- (a) cauda equina syndrome;
- (b) cerebrovascular accident;
- (c) epilepsy;
- (d) moderate to severe traumatic brain injury;
- (e) multiple sclerosis;
- (f) Parkinson's disease or secondary parkinsonism; or
- (g) spinal cord injury.

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*.