



National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission

1608 K Street, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20006

K. Robert Lewis, Chairman - Connecticut

Peter S. Gaytan, Director - Maryland

13-09

May 15, 2009

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) adds AL Amyloidosis to the Agent Orange/herbicide Presumptive List

Background

Effective May 7, 2009, VA has finalized the proposed rule establishing AL Amyloidosis as a presumptive condition on the Agent Orange/herbicide list. Previously, in November of 2008 VA had published this change as a proposed rule under the applicable procedures for public comment. As the public comment period has passed and VA has reviewed all comments received, the proposed rule has been accepted as the final rule without change.

The provisions of this revision apply to all applications for benefits pending before VA or received after May 7, 2009 as well as to review of certain previously denied claims to the extent provided in 38 CFR § 3.816.

As noted in VA&R Bulletin 36-08, dated November 4, 2008, an Institute of Medicine (IOM) report “Veterans and Agent Orange: Update 2006,” released on July 27, 2007, IOM concluded that “there is limited or suggestive evidence of an association between exposures to the compounds of interest [found in the herbicide Agent Orange] and AL amyloidosis.” The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, after considering all of the evidence, subsequently determined that there is a positive association between exposure to herbicide agents and the occurrence of AL amyloidosis.

AL amyloidosis is a rare monoclonal plasma cell disorder that shares biological and pathophysiological features of multiple myeloma and some lymphomas that have been associated with herbicide exposure in previous IOM reports. Although there is relatively little direct epidemiological evidence concerning the relation of AL amyloidosis to herbicide exposure, the

Secretary of Veterans Affairs noted that IOM considered the evidence linking AL amyloidosis to multiple myelomas and lymphomas to be significant, if indirect, evidence of an association.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Smithson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

STEVE SMITHSON, Deputy Director
National Veterans Affairs and
Rehabilitation Commission