IS THERE TOTAL OCCUPATIONAL AND SOCIAL IMPAIRMENT DUE TO MENTAL DISORDER SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS? No

IF THERE IS NOT TOTAL OCCUPATIONAL AND SOCIAL IMPAIRMENT, DO MENTAL DISORDER SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS RESULT IN DEFICIENCIES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS (JUDGMENT, THINKING, FAMILY RELATIONS, WORK, MOOD OR SCHOOL)? No

IS THERE REDUCED RELIABILITY AND PRODUCTIVITY DUE TO MENTAL DISORDER SYMPTOMS? Yes

EXAMPLES AND PERTINENT SYMPTOMS, INCLUDING THOSE ALREADY REPORTED:
The Vet's ADLs are limited by his medical/physical problems and negatively impacted by pain. His attention and concentration are impacted by his pain. There is reduced reliability and productivity due to the pain d/o. His depression, which has taken the form of a dysthymic d/o, also results in reduced reliability and productivity.

WAS A MEDICAL OPINION REQUESTED? Yes

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COMPENSATION AND PENSION EXAMINATION
MEDICAL OPINION
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A STANDARD MEDICAL OPINION WAS REQUESTED.
PROVIDERS RESTATEMENT OF REQUESTED MEDICAL OPINION. THIS IS NOT THE MEDICAL OPINION ITSELF:
Please provide medical opinion as to the effect of the veteran's service connected disability, which is the service conneced chronic lumbar strain with degenerative disc disease?

Depression is due to or a result of The back strain injury the Vet encountered circa 1973 when active duty Air Force.

WERE PRIVATE MEDICAL RECORDS REVIEWED: None provided
WERE SERVICE MEDICAL RECORDS REVIEWED: Yes; separation exam noting depression and sleep disturbances
WERE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION RECORDS REVIEWED: Yes
PERTINENT EVIDENCE: Txment intervention for depression in CPRS notes at VAMC's CBOC
WERE OTHER RECORDS REVIEWED: None provided

(STANDARD EXAMINERS MEDICAL OPINION)

THE CONDITION/DISABILITY Please provide medical opinion as to the effect of the veteran's service connected disability, which is the service conneced chronic lumbar strain with degenerative disc disease?

I CANNOT RESOLVE THIS ISSUE WITHOUT RESORT TO MERE SPECULATION. The back strain injury the Vet encountered circa 1973 when active duty Air Force which is the service conneced chronic lumbar strain with degenerative disc disease.

RATIONALE FOR OPINION GIVEN: In the clinical opinion of the undersigned, whether the Vet's current depression is caused by or due to the service connected chronic lumbar strain with degenerative disc disease, I cannot resolve this issue without resort to mere speculation. The Vet was also in an auto accident circa 1999 where his back was hurt as well as the aggravation of the degenerative disc disease was experienced. In addition, he also sustained a knee injury and he medically retired circa Feb 2001. This would be a matter of resorting to speculation to try to determine the Vet's current depressive signs and sxs which have taken the form of a dysthymic d/o is solely caused by the lumbar spine strain he experienced when he was active duty military.

In the clinical opinion of the undersigned, with regard to the depressive d/o, there are developmentally other psychosocial, med/physical events which this Vet has experienced other than the family problems he experienced when he was active duty military and subsequently, as noted during this examination report; to be able to clinically attribute his current depressive d/o solely to military exposure. In addition, at the date of this examination and 26 years of life cycle change events, it is virtually impossible to try to partial out signs and symptoms. In conclusion, it would be a matter of resorting to speculation to etiologically try to partial out the importance of one depressive psychosoc event or occurrence during this Vet's life time over the other.
OTHER COMMENT: This clinical opinion is based on the clinical interview, the MSE, and the psychodiagnostic testing and the following supportive medical and psychological published research as follows:
Rona, R.J., Hyams, K.C., & Wessely, S. (2005) Screening for Psychological Illness in Military Personnel. Journal of the American Medical Association, 293, 101, 1257-1260.

Seal, K.H., Bertenthal, D., Miner, C.R., Sen, S., Marmar, C. (2007) Bringing the war back home. Archives of Internal Medicine, 167, 5, 421-520.

Hedlund, S. & Rude, S.S. (1995) Evidence of latent depressive schemes in formerly depressed individuals. Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 104, 3, 409-552.

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This document was originally initiated by Linda J. Hartwell, PhD and