

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM13-0011207		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	09/19/2013	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	12/12/2009
<b>Decision Date:</b>	01/23/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	08/13/2013
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	08/14/2013

### HOW THE IMR FINAL DETERMINATION WAS MADE

MAXIMUS Federal Services sent the complete case file to a physician reviewer. He/she has no affiliation with the employer, employee, providers or the claims administrator. The physician reviewer is Board Certified in Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, and is licensed to practice in California. He/she has been in active clinical practice for more than five years and is currently working at least 24 hours a week in active practice. The physician reviewer was selected based on his/her clinical experience, education, background, and expertise in the same or similar specialties that evaluate and/or treat the medical condition and disputed items/services. He/She is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

### CLINICAL CASE SUMMARY

The expert reviewer developed the following clinical case summary based on a review of the case file, including all medical records:

The underlying date of injury in this case is 12/12/2009. The reference diagnosis is a wrist sprain. The treating diagnoses additionally include the diagnosis of a left wrist triangular fibrocartilage tear. A primary treating physician's progress report of 08/01/2013 notes that the patient had attended 12 postoperative therapy sessions and is still unable to have full use of his left upper extremity during activity and notes that this was preventing him from returning to work which requires use of his left upper extremity. The physician therefore requested physical therapy 3 times a week for 4 weeks to work on flexibility and muscle strength in order to improve the symptoms in the patient's left wrist. An initial physician review in this case states, "The claimant has had at least 32 physical therapy treatment sessions...There is no medical rationale for continued physical therapy. Contrary to popular practice, physical therapy does not resolve any medical conditions, nor will it offer long-lasting pain relief." A physical therapy status report as of 12/27/2012 indicates that the patient at that time had attended 9 physical therapy visits and had begun treatment on 11/06/2012 with the diagnosis of status post left wrist surgery. At that time, a triangular fibrocartilage strap brace was provided for the left wrist.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

The Final Determination was based on decisions for the disputed items/services set forth below:

**Physical Therapy 3 x 4 left wrist:** Overturned

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Postsurgical Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 11.

**Decision rationale:** The MTUS Post-surgical Treatment Guidelines Section 24.3, page 11, indicates only the surgeon who performed the operation...or physician designated by that surgeon can make a determination of medical necessity and prescribe post-surgical treatment...If it is determined that additional functional improvement can be accomplished after completion of the general course of therapy, physical medicine treatment may be continued up to the end of the postsurgical physical medicine. The specific end of the post-surgical physical medicine period cannot be determined given the information available. However, the medical records document very specific functional goals aimed at return to work. These records outline goals to advance the employee's therapy program which would not be feasible on an independent basis given the reported limitations in weightbearing in the affected postsurgical limb. There is considerable discrepancy between the physician review in this case and the treating physician notes. It is difficult to correlate these perspectives. In any event the treating physician notes do very specifically outline specific treatment notes aimed towards return to work, and again this treatment could not be accomplished independently through home rehabilitation. Therefore, this request is medically necessary.