

Case Number:	CM13-0013058		
Date Assigned:	09/25/2013	Date of Injury:	10/30/2012
Decision Date:	08/01/2014	UR Denial Date:	07/29/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	08/19/2013

HOW THE IMR FINAL DETERMINATION WAS MADE

MAXIMUS Federal Services sent the complete case file to an expert reviewer. He/she has no affiliation with the employer, employee, providers or the claims administrator. The expert reviewer is Board Certified in Occupational Medicine 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 expert 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:

This patient is a 46 year old male, with a date of injury of 10/30/12. Subsequent to a slip and fall off of a ladder he had surgery for a complex ankle fracture. The surgery was initially delayed due to the amount of superficial soft tissue trauma. Subsequent to the surgery he had 34 physical therapy sessions with continued discomfort associated with weight bearing. He eventually had a hardware removal and a few more sessions of therapy in association with the removal. More recently, a QME evaluation recommended a continued home based program of strengthening and stretching prior to a MMI status.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

PHYSICAL THERAPY 2 TIMES A WEEK TIMES 4 WEEKS FOR THE RIGHT ANKLE: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Ankle and Foot Complaints, Postsurgical Treatment Guidelines.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Postsurgical Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 13-14.

Decision rationale: MTUS Post Surgical Guidelines recommend up to 21 sessions of post operative physical therapy for complex surgical ankle fractures. This patient had been authorized

and completed 34 sessions and it appears that additional therapy was authorized after a more recent removal of hardware. Even though there was a delayed recovery, there are no unusual circumstances or post operative complications that justify additional extensions of therapy at the time of the request. After 8 months of rehabilitation and 34 sessions of post operative therapy the medical necessity of ongoing hands on therapy was not demonstrated. The request for physical therapy 2 times a week times 4 weeks for the right ankle is not medically necessary and appropriate.