

Case Number:	CM13-0020686		
Date Assigned:	02/05/2014	Date of Injury:	08/10/2012
Decision Date:	04/22/2014	UR Denial Date:	08/16/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/05/2013

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 Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, has a subspecialty in Pain management 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 is a patient with a date of injury of 8/10/12. A utilization review determination dated 8/16/13 recommends non-certification of physical therapy. 8/13/13 medical report identifies neck, back, and shoulder pain. On exam, there is tenderness with limited ROM. Weakness is identified in almost all muscles tested, rated from 3/5 to 4/5. Paresthesias to light touch are noted in the dermatomes C7-8 right hand. Patellar reflex 3+ on the left and 2+ on the right. The assessment notes a mild flare up of the right shoulder.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

12 PHYSICAL THERAPY SESSIONS: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines PHYSICAL MEDICINE, Page(s): 99.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines PHYSICAL MEDICINE Page(s): 98-99.

Decision rationale: Regarding the request for 12 physical therapy sessions, California MTUS cites that "patients are instructed and expected to continue active therapies at home as an extension of the treatment process in order to maintain improvement levels." Within the documentation available for review, there is documentation of completion of prior PT sessions,

but there is no documentation of specific objective functional improvement with the previous sessions or why any remaining deficits cannot be addressed within the context of an independent home exercise program, yet are expected to improve with formal supervised therapy. Furthermore, the California MTUS supports only up to 10 PT sessions for this injury and, unfortunately, there is no provision for modification of the current request. In light of the above issues, the currently requested 12 physical therapy sessions is not medically necessary.