MAXIMUS Federal Services

Case Number:	CM13-0021346		
Date Assigned:	01/22/2014	Date of Injury:	11/05/2010
Decision Date:	03/25/2014	UR Denial Date:	08/28/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/09/2013

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 Clinical Psychology, has a subspecialty in Health Psychology and 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 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:

This patient is a 59 year old female who reported sustaining an injury on 11/05/2010. At that time she was assaulted during a home invasion robbery during which she experienced significant violence and had her hands and feet bound. Her diagnosis is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Chronic; with reports of stomach churning, severe anxiety, startle response-hyper-vigilance, back pain, flashbacks, crying, panic, depression, pain and loss of ability to easily function and loss of quality of life. She has been treated with several psychiatric medications and sleeping agents as well as individual psychotherapy sessions that have included EMDR techniques. She has also had physical therapy, acupuncture, and conventional medical care, a request for continued psychotherapy was non-certified.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Psychotherapy with Dr. through the end of September 2013: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation the Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Treatment for Worker's Comp Guidelines, Mental Illness &Stress Procedure Summary; Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Part Two, Behavioral interventions: cognitive behavioral therapy, (CBT) Page(s): 23. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Psychotherapy Guidelines

Decision rationale: 515 pages of medical notes were carefully reviewed for this IMR with a request for continued individual outpatient therapy under consideration. It was very difficult to determine the total number of sessions she has had to date. It appears that from March 10, 2012 to September 2012 she had a minimum of 17 sessions and between September 2012 and January 2013 an additional 29 sessions for a total of at least 46 sessions. Also, the number of psychotherapy sessions provided to this patient in 2013, if any, is unclear. It appears that the patient showed a good response to the treatment she received to date and objective functional improvement was documented in the progress notes. If the number of sessions was equal to or greater than 46, or even the lesser number of sessions that might be more accurate of 32, she has exceeded the originally stated treatment of up to 25 sessions by at least 12 and probably 21. Given that the normal treatment duration is suggested to be up to a maximum of 20 sessions she has received that and more. The provider included a reference that in some cases as many as 50 sessions can be used in some very complex cases however even this number has been nearly reached and adequate documentation of why this case would warrant this unusual maximum was not supported by the case materials provided. The non-