

Case Number:	CM13-0022012		
Date Assigned:	10/16/2013	Date of Injury:	02/06/2013
Decision Date:	05/05/2014	UR Denial Date:	08/21/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/09/2013

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 & 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 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:

According to the records made available for review, this is a 42-year-old male with a 2/6/13 date of injury. At the time (8/15/13) of request for authorization for outpatient functional restoration program (FRP) for the lumbar spine for a total of four weeks, there is documentation of subjective (depression and leg pain with numbness and weakness) and objective (decreased lordosis with mild scoliosis, decreased lumbar spine range of motion, positive straight leg raise bilaterally, and tenderness over the L5-S1 interspace) findings, current diagnoses (lumbosacral neuritis, disc displacement, and organic affective syndrome), and treatment to date (transforaminal epidural steroid injection, physical therapy, and medications). A 8/8/13 medical report identifies an interdisciplinary evaluation which demonstrates significant functional deficit, mood disorder associated with chronic pain syndrome, and recommendation for the 4 week functional restoration pain management program. A 8/30/13 medical report identifies that the patient is not a surgical candidate, has had extensive conservative treatment and has not responded adequately such that he can return to work, and remains disabled from his lumbar discogenic injury resulting in radiculopathy.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

AN OUTPATIENT FUNCTIONAL RESTORATION PROGRAM (FRP) FOR THE LUMBAR SPINE FOR A TOTAL OF FOUR WEEKS: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Functional Restoration Program.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Chronic Pain Programs Page(s): 30-32.

Decision rationale: MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines identifies documentation that an adequate and thorough evaluation has been made, including baseline functional testing so follow-up with the same test can note functional improvement; previous methods of treating chronic pain have been unsuccessful and there is an absence of other options likely to result in significant clinical improvement; the patient has a significant loss of ability to function independently resulting from the chronic pain; the patient is not a candidate where surgery or other treatments would clearly be warranted; and the patient exhibits motivation to change, as criteria necessary to support the medical necessity of a functional restoration/chronic pain program. In addition, MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines identifies that treatment is not suggested for longer than 2 weeks without evidence of demonstrated efficacy as documentation by subjective and objective gains. Within the medical information available for review, there is documentation of diagnoses of lumbosacral neuritis, disc displacement, and organic affective syndrome. In addition, there is documentation that an adequate and thorough evaluation has been made, including baseline functional testing so follow-up with the same test can note functional improvement; previous methods of treating chronic pain have been unsuccessful and there is an absence of other options likely to result in significant clinical improvement; the patient has a significant loss of ability to function independently resulting from the chronic pain; the patient is not a candidate where surgery or other treatments would clearly be warranted; and the patient exhibits motivation to change. However, the requested authorization for outpatient functional restoration program (FRP) for the lumbar spine for a total of four weeks exceeds guidelines (treatment is not suggested for longer than 2 weeks without evidence of demonstrated efficacy as documentation by subjective and objective gains). Therefore, the treatment as requested is not medically necessary.