

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM13-0022798		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	11/20/2013	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	04/25/2012
<b>Decision Date:</b>	02/11/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	08/26/2013
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	09/11/2013

### 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:

This patient sustained an injury while transporting clients on 4/25/12. Request under consideration is an MRI of the Cervical Spine. Per report dated 7/15/13 from [REDACTED], the patient complained of chronic low back pain with associated pain in the legs; chronic neck pain without report of arm pain. Examination showed neck pain with pressure to right C4, C5, and C6 with restricted rotation and normal motor, deep tendon reflexes, and sensation of the bilateral upper extremities. Conservative treatment has included medication management, physical therapy, self-directed exercise program at home and the gym. Review of report dated 3/6/13 noted the patient with improved performance of the gym exercises and no longer exhibited any arm pain. Request for MRI of the cervical spine was non-certified on 8/26/13 by [REDACTED], citing guidelines criteria and lack of medical indication.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**1 MRI of the cervical spine:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 8 Neck and Upper Back Complaints Page(s): 177-178.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 8 Neck and Upper Back Complaints Page(s): 171, 177-179.

**Decision rationale:** The patient sustained an injury while transporting clients on 4/25/12. Request under consideration is an MRI of the Cervical Spine. Per ACOEM Treatment Guidelines for the Neck and Upper Back Disorders, under Special Studies and Diagnostic and Treatment Considerations, pages 171-171, 177-179 states criteria for ordering imaging studies such as the requested CT scan of the Thoracic Spine include Emergence of a red flag; Physiologic evidence of tissue insult or neurologic dysfunction; Failure to progress in a strengthening program intended to avoid surgery; Clarification of the anatomy prior to an invasive procedure. Physiologic evidence may be in the form of definitive neurologic findings on physical examination and electrodiagnostic studies. Unequivocal findings that identify specific nerve compromise on the neurologic examination are sufficient evidence to warrant imaging studies if symptoms persist; however, review of submitted medical reports, including report from [REDACTED] on 7/15/13 have not adequately demonstrated the indication for the MRI of the Cervical spine nor document any specific clinical findings to support this imaging study as the patient has intact motor strength, DTRs, and sensation throughout bilateral upper extremities. When the neurologic examination is less clear, further physiologic evidence of nerve dysfunction can be obtained before ordering an imaging study. The MRI of the cervical spine is not medically necessary and appropriate.