

Case Number:	CM13-0028073		
Date Assigned:	11/22/2013	Date of Injury:	07/03/2009
Decision Date:	02/05/2014	UR Denial Date:	09/05/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/23/2013

HOW THE IMR FINAL DETERMINATION WAS MADE

MAXIMUS Federal Services sent the complete case file to a licensed reviewer. He/she has no affiliation with the employer, employee, providers or the claims administrator. The reviewer is a licensed Psychologist (Psy. D.) and is licensed to practice in Texas. 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 licensed 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:

The patient is a 42-year-old male who reported an injury on 07/03/2009, whereupon he sustained a crush injury to the distal tip of his right middle finger when a door was slammed abruptly onto his right hand. The patient subsequently underwent a distal amputation of the distal tip of the right 3rd phalanx. Later he developed right upper extremity pain secondary to complex regional pain syndrome. The patient has a further complaint of neck and low back pain radiating into his right lower extremity. The patient has deferred the spinal cord stimulator trial and would like to continue with conservative management of his pain. He is a graduate of the [REDACTED] and continues to perform home exercises learned at the program. He also underwent massage therapy with some benefit noted. The patient was noted to have a lot of anxiety and depression; however, he denies any suicidal or homicidal ideations. The patient's most recent clinical exam was dated 11/19/2013, whereupon he stated he had a pain of 5/10 on the VAS scale. The same morning, he noted that his pain had been at a 9/10 on the VAS, but his pain reduced once he moved around. He denied any acute changes to his pain conditions since his previous visit from 10/22/2013, which noted no significant pathology reports on that date either. The physician is now requesting a prospective 6 follow-up visits with psychologist [REDACTED].

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

6 Follow-Up Visits with Psychologist [REDACTED]: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Psychological treatment Page(s): 101-102.

Decision rationale: The licensed Reviewer's decision rationale: California MTUS states that psychological treatment is recommended for appropriately identified patients during treatment for chronic pain. Psychological intervention for chronic pain includes setting goals, determining appropriateness of treatment, conceptualizing a patient's pain beliefs and coping styles, assessing psychological and cognitive function, and address comorbid mood disorders (such as depression, anxiety, panic disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder). The documentation notes that the patient has undergone previous psychological treatments. However, in the documentation provided for review, there are no reports from the psychological therapy indicating what the patient's plan of care would be. At this time, without having sufficient information providing a thorough overview of the patient's previous psychological therapy sessions, the medical necessity for Prospective 6 Follow-Up Visits with Psychologist [REDACTED] cannot be established at this time. As such, the requested service is non-certified.