

Case Number:	CM13-0030160		
Date Assigned:	11/27/2013	Date of Injury:	06/13/2012
Decision Date:	01/30/2014	UR Denial Date:	09/03/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/25/2013

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 Psychiatry, 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 is a 35 year old who has a back injury. Surgery has been recommended but the patient is more worried about being unable to work and feed his family if he becomes disabled as a result of surgery. At least one physician has agreed with him about there being risks with back surgery in the records provided. At issue is whether there is medical necessity for "Chronic Pain Psychological Evaluation plus six (6) Sessions.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Chronic pain psychological evaluation plus six (6) sessions: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints Page(s): 298-301.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 23,100,101.

Decision rationale: Per the Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, "Recommended. The identification and reinforcement of coping skills is often more useful in the treatment of pain than ongoing medication or therapy, which could lead to psychological or physical dependence. ODG Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) guidelines for chronic pain: Screen for patients with risk factors for delayed recovery, including fear avoidance beliefs. See Fear-avoidance beliefs

questionnaire (FABQ). Initial therapy for these "at risk" patients should be physical medicine for exercise instruction, using a cognitive motivational approach to physical medicine. Consider separate psychotherapy CBT referral after 4 weeks if lack of progress from physical medicine alone: - Initial trial of 3-4 psychotherapy visits over 2 weeks - With evidence of objective functional improvement, total of up to 6-10 visits over 5-6 weeks (individual sessions)" These guidelines are clear that a total of up to 6-10 visits are in keeping with guidelines. In this case there is no evidence of a diagnosis of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. A request for six sessions is just within guidelines and as such is medically necessary per MTUS. In addition, the psychological evaluation, per the Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, is critical and supported by the guidelines.