MAXIMUS Federal Services

Case Number:	CM13-0033494		
Date Assigned:	12/06/2013	Date of Injury:	06/15/2000
Decision Date:	01/28/2014	UR Denial Date:	09/24/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/10/2013

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 Orthopedic Surgery 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:

The claimant is a 51-year-old female who was injured in a work-related accident on June 15, 2000. Clinical records reviewed include a recent assessment on August 19, 2013 with [redacted]. This assessment indicated the claimant is status post right elbow surgery for epicondylitis in April 2012 as well as bilateral wrist carpal tunnel release procedures performed in July 2011 on the right and April 2010 on the left with underlying diagnosis of a right trigger thumb and flexor tenosynovitis to the bilateral wrists. She was also with a cervical strain, thoracolumbar strains, and a history of depression. He indicated on that date that given the claimant's ongoing orthopedic injuries, a "Life Care Planner" was recommended given the prolonged duration of the ongoing treatment as well as authorization for a requested nurse case manager being assigned to the claim. Further clinical records pertinent to these above requests are not documented.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Nurse case manager: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM) guidelines, Chapter 7, Examinations and Consultations, page 127.

Decision rationale: Based on California ACOEM guidelines, referral for a nurse case manager in this case is not medically apparent. The documentation does not indicate the specific need for this at this time nor would this reviewer not understand why a nurse case manager had not been assigned to a case with a work-related injury date of greater than three and one-half years ago. Clinical records at this point in time from a utilization review point of view would not necessitate the specific request based on the claimant's current working diagnosis and orthopedic conditions.

Life care planner: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM) guidelines, Chapter 7, Examinations and Consultations, page 127.

Decision rationale: As requested by the treating provider, the role of a Life Care Planner is not supported. While California ACOEM guidelines would recommend the role of consultation if diagnosis is uncertain or when the course of care would benefit from additional expertise, the claimant's current diagnosis of status post carpal tunnel release, a trigger thumb, and chronic sprains for three and one-half years would not necessitate further care particularly in regard to a "Life Care Planner." The specific request in this case would not be supported.