

Case Number:	CM13-0034978		
Date Assigned:	08/04/2014	Date of Injury:	01/21/2010
Decision Date:	10/07/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/01/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/16/2013

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 and 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 66-year-old male with a 10/21/10 date of injury, and C5-6 anterior cervical decompression and fusion on 2/12. At the time (9/30/13) of the decision for retrospective H-Wave E1399 to treat neck/thoracic spine date of service 11/04/11, there is documentation of subjective (bilateral neck and lower thoracic region pain) and objective (spasm and tenderness to palpitation over the paravertebral muscles, and positive facet loading test) findings. The current diagnoses are cervical pain, cervical radiculopathy, and chronic mid thoracic pain. The treatment to date includes ongoing treatment with Nucynta and Zanaflex. There is no documentation of chronic soft tissue inflammation, H-wave used as an adjunct to a program of evidence-based functional restoration, and failure of initially recommended conservative care, including recommended physical therapy and transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS).

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Retrospective H-Wave E1399 to treat neck/thoracic spine date of service 11/04/11: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 117.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Low Back Complaints Page(s): 117-118.

Decision rationale: MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines identifies that a one-month home-based trial of H-Wave stimulation may be considered as a noninvasive conservative option for chronic soft tissue inflammation used as an adjunct to a program of evidence-based functional restoration, and only following failure of initially recommended conservative care, including recommended physical therapy (i.e., exercise) and medications, plus transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS). In addition, MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines identifies that the effects and benefits of the one month trial should be documented (as an adjunct to ongoing treatment modalities within a functional restoration approach) as to how often the unit was used, as well as outcomes in terms of pain relief and function. Within the medical information available for review, there is documentation of diagnoses of cervical pain, cervical radiculopathy, and chronic mid thoracic pain. In addition, there is documentation of conservative treatment (medications). However, there is no documentation of chronic soft tissue inflammation, H-wave used as an adjunct to a program of evidence-based functional restoration, and failure of initially recommended conservative care, including recommended physical therapy and transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS). Therefore, based on guidelines and a review of the evidence, the request for Retrospective H-Wave E1399 to treat neck/thoracic spine date of service 11/04/11 is not medically necessary.