

Case Number:	CM13-0041541		
Date Assigned:	12/20/2013	Date of Injury:	11/04/1991
Decision Date:	02/04/2014	UR Denial Date:	09/17/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/29/2013

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 Psychology 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 patient is a 53-year-old male who sustained a back injury on 11/4/91 while lifting a 2X4 from under a pile of lumber debris. He was initially treated with physical therapy, medication, rest, ice, and time off from work. Ultimately, he had an L4-5 microdiscectomy in 1997 and underwent a two-level instrumentation fusion in 2000. He also had a cholecystectomy in 2/11. The patient attended a total of 315 psychotherapy sessions from 3/19/01 through 11/13/12. On 8/12/13, ██████████ noted that the patient was crying, very upset, and emotional and verbalized thoughts of self-harm. On 11/11/13, ██████████ reported the patient met the criteria for Chronic Pain Syndrome and that he reported moderately severe, constant pain in his lower back. He also stated that the pain has affected the patient's ability to perform his activities of daily living and that it has stopped him from going to work, performing household chores, doing yard work, shopping, socializing with friends, exercising and participating in recreational activities. ██████████ also stated the patient's psychological symptoms had developed as a result of his chronic pain syndrome. On 11/3/13, ██████████, reported the patient had a severe depressive disorder with chronic suicidal ideation and that he presented with complaints of neck pain, low back pain that radiated to legs, groin and testicles. The patient also reported severe depression, crying spells, thoughts of death, suicidal ideation, explosive anger, anhedonia, insomnia, episodes of anxiety, nightmares, memory problems, and significantly reduced libido. ██████████ noted the patient's score on the BDI was 58 and on the HAD his depression score and anxiety score was 17 and 18, respectively and diagnosed the patient with major depressive disorder, single episode, moderate, with suicidal ideation and pain disorder, mixed.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Psychotherapy: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines California Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, May 2009..

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines Part 2 - Pain Interventions and Treatments, Behavioral.

Decision rationale: The patient has a history of a significant psychological condition, which has been treated extensively. The patient was recently noted to have a chronic pain syndrome, that his chronic pain reportedly is stopping him from doing many activities of daily living, and that his psychological symptoms had developed as a result of his chronic pain syndrome. The patient underwent a recent psychological diagnostic interview during which he reported severe depression and expressed suicidal ideation. Through the use of subjective and objective measures, he was diagnosed with major depressive disorder, single episode, moderate, with suicidal ideation and pain disorder, mixed. Considering the ongoing severity of the patient's psychological symptoms, including thoughts of self-harm, the request for psychotherapy should be approved.