

Case Number:	CM13-0044723		
Date Assigned:	12/27/2013	Date of Injury:	01/30/2007
Decision Date:	07/09/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/10/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/31/2013

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 Internal Medicine, has a subspecialty in Pulmonary Diseases 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:

The injured worker is a 58-year-old female who reported an injury on 01/30/2007. The mechanism of injury was not provided in the documentation. Per the documentation dated 09/27/2012, the injured worker was reported to have had a right carotid artery aneurysm on 08/17/2012, and was being seen by a neurologist for that diagnosis. It was also noted that the injured worker's blood pressure was under control with current medications. Per the provider's documentation an MRI of the neck dated 08/18/2012 was within normal limits. Per the same documentation an MRI of the brain on the same date demonstrated a right internal carotid aneurysm. The progress note dated 02/20/2013 reported the injured worker's blood pressure at 138/89. The diagnoses for the injured worker included the right internal carotid artery aneurysm, chronic lumbar radicular syndrome, chronic cervical radiculopathy, and status post cervical fusions at C4 to C7. The request for authorization for medical treatment for the carotid ultrasound and the provider's rationale for that request were not provided within the documentation. Previous treatments for the injured worker included physical therapy, acupuncture, and medications.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

CAROTID ULTRASOUND: 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 Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/health-topics/topics/cu/>; <http://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/carotid-ultrasound/basics/why-its-done/prc-20012897>.

Decision rationale: Per online medical reviews carotid ultrasound is a painless and harmless test that uses high-frequency sound waves to create pictures of the insides of your carotid arteries. Carotid ultrasound shows whether a waxy substance called plaque has built up in your carotid arteries. The buildup of plaque in the carotid arteries is called carotid artery disease. A standard carotid ultrasound shows the structure of your carotid arteries. Your doctor may recommend a carotid ultrasound if you have medical conditions that increase the risk of stroke, such as, high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol, a family history of stroke or heart disease, a recent transient ischemic attack (TIA) or stroke, or abnormal sound in carotid arteries (bruit), detected by your doctor using a stethoscope. There was a lack of clinical documentation regarding the aneurysm noted on 08/17/2012, including findings from previous ultrasounds. There was a lack of current clinical findings to warrant the request for the current ultrasound. The injured worker was noted to have hypertension. However, it was noted to be under control with medication. Therefore, the request for the carotid ultrasound is non-certified.