

Case Number:	CM13-0048762		
Date Assigned:	12/27/2013	Date of Injury:	03/09/2001
Decision Date:	06/09/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/23/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/06/2013

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 Neurological 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 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:

A previous utilization review, dated October 23, 2013, provided only partial certification for a nutritionist consultation and weight management program. The reviewer indicated that nutritionist consultation was certified, but recommended review of the proposed interventions prior to authorizing a weight management program. The clinical document dated October 10, 2013 indicates that the claimant returns for flare up of shoulder symptoms. No vital signs were obtained on this visit and the exam is limited to the following documentation "WN/WD, good grooming and personal hygiene. Mental status is normal mood and affect, A&O x3." The clinician indicates that the claimant's current weight is affecting the recovery from orthopedic symptomology and notes that weight loss is likely to benefit the claimant in terms of pain relief, improved function, quality of life, and decreased utilization of medication. Clinical counseling on diet changes, diminished calorie intake, and a judicious stretching and exercise program occurred. The clinician also recommends a weight management program using the same justification as the recommendation for a nutritionist consult. Previous documentation, on September 27, 2012, documents that the claimant weighs 290 pounds with a height of 62.25 inches. This would indicate that the claimant's BMI is 52.61.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

NUTRITIONIST CONSULT AND WEIGHT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation MTUS: ACOEM PRACTICE GUIDELINES, 2ND EDITION (2004), PAGE 127.

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), 2nd Edition, Chapter 7, Independent Medical Exams And Consultations, Page 127.

Decision rationale: The ACOEM notes that a consultation may be obtained when the diagnosis is uncertain, extremely complex, when psychosocial factors are present, or when the course of care may benefit from additional expertise. Based on the clinical documentation provided, the claimant is morbidly obese which is likely impacting the underlying orthopedic symptomology. The clinical documents also indicate that the clinician provided counseling on dietary changes, weight loss strategies, and a judicious stretching and exercise program. The reviewer and the treating clinician agree that a nutritionist consult was medically necessary, and this is upheld by the ACOEM recommendations. However, the clinical indication for a weight management program is less clear without the recommendation of the nutritionist and further explanation of what the weight loss management program will consist of. As such, given the limited information provided with regards to the weight loss management program it would not be medically necessary.