MAXIMUS Federal Services

Case Number:	CM13-0061275		
Date Assigned:	02/28/2014	Date of Injury:	05/07/2001
Decision Date:	09/05/2014	UR Denial Date:	11/27/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	12/04/2013

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 Occupational Medicine 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 applicant is a represented [redacted] employee who has filed a claim for chronic pain syndrome, chronic shoulder pain, and chronic wrist pain reportedly associated with an industrial injury of May 7, 2001. Thus far, the applicant has been treated with the following: Analgesic medications; attorney representation; transfer of care to and from various providers in various specialties; opioid therapy; topical agents; and extensive periods of time off work.In a Utilization Review Report dated November 27, 2013, the claims administrator denied a request for six months gym membership with pool access and also concurrently denied request for laboratory testing. The claims administrator did not cite any guidelines in its decision to deny laboratory studies. The applicant's attorney subsequently appealed. In a handwritten progress note dated October 31, 2013, the attending provider did seek authorization for CBC and comprehensive metabolic panel along with a six month gym membership with pool access. The applicant was described as using topical Dendracin, Vicodin, and Robaxin owing to ongoing complaints of wrist, arm, and shoulder pain. The attending provider stated that the applicant had some issues with NSAID intolerance. Almost all the documentation comprised the preprinted checkboxes with little or no narrative commentary.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

CBC, CMP: Overturned

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAIDS, Specific Drug List and Adverse Effect topic Page(s): 70.

Decision rationale: As noted on page 70 of the MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, periodic assessment of an applicant's hematologic function, renal function, and hepatic function are indicated in applicant's using NSAIDs. In this case, while the applicant is not using NSAIDs, the applicant is apparently using opioids, including Vicodin. By implication, then, assessment of the applicant's hematologic function, renal function, and hepatic function to ensure that the applicant's present renal and hepatic function are compatible with currently prescribed medications is indicated. Therefore, the request for CBC, CMP is medically necessary and appropriate.

A SIX MONTH MEMBERSHIP WITH POOL ACCESS: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 11 Forearm, Wrist, and Hand Complaints.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 5 Cornerstones of Disability Prevention and Management Page(s): 83.

Decision rationale: As noted in the MTUS-adopted ACOEM Guidelines in Chapter 5, page 83, to achieve functional recovery, applicants must assume some responsibilities, one of which includes adhering to and maintaining exercise regimens. The gym membership being sought by the attending provider, thus, represents an article of applicant's responsibility as opposed to an article of payer responsibility, per ACOEM. Accordingly, the request is not medically necessary.