

Case Number:	CM13-0061942		
Date Assigned:	12/30/2013	Date of Injury:	07/27/2011
Decision Date:	04/11/2014	UR Denial Date:	11/11/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	12/05/2013

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 General Surgery and is licensed to practice in Texas. 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 female who reported an injury on 07/27/2011 after she lifted a heavy object and while carrying it suffered a slip and fall that reportedly caused injury to her low back. The patient reportedly failed to respond to conservative treatments and ultimately required surgical intervention. The patient's application for independent medical review documented the patient was authorized for a right microdiscectomy of L4-5 and L5-S1 and hemilaminotomy and foraminotomy of L4-5 and L5-S1 with bilateral decompression and assistant surgeon. However, an additional request was made for a vascular exposure surgeon.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Vascular exposure surgeon: 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 Vascular Complications of Exposure for Anterior Lumbar Interbody Fusion. Journal of Vascular Surgery

Decision rationale: The requested vascular exposure surgeon is not medically necessary or appropriate. Peer-reviewed literature does indicate that a vascular surgeon would be appropriate

for a surgical team doing spinal surgery with an anterior approach. However, there was no recent clinical documentation by the requesting physician describing the approach of the surgery. The treating provider does not provide a clear rationale for why a vascular surgeon would be needed on the patient's surgical team. There is no way to determine if the treating provider's intention is to approach the surgery anteriorly and the requested surgery is not a fusion. As such, the requested vascular exposure surgeon is not medically necessary or appropriate.