

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0000793		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	01/22/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	11/28/2012
<b>Decision Date:</b>	05/12/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	12/26/2013
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	01/02/2014

### 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 Orthopedic 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 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:

This is a 51-year-old male who was injured in a work related accident on November 28, 2012. The clinical records provided for review included a January 16, 2014 progress report documenting continued complaints of pain in the left knee and a feeling of "giving way." Examination documented tenderness over the lateral inferior patella and motion from 0 to 120 degrees. The claimant was diagnosed with left knee pain with "degenerative changes." The recommendation was for medication management with Norco, follow-up in eight weeks and continued use of "home exercises." The report of radiographs of the left knee dated November 21, 2013 documented a "normal examination." The request was also made for a corticosteroid injection to the knee and a knee brace.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

#### **STEROID INJECTION TO THE LEFT KNEE: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation OFFICIAL DISABILITY GUIDELINES (ODG).

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 13 Knee Complaints Page(s): 346. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation OFFICIAL DISABILITY GUIDELINES

(ODG)--TREATMENT IN WORKERS COMP, 18TH EDITION, 2013 UPDATES: KNEE PROCEDURE - CORTICOSTEROID INJECTIONS.

**Decision rationale:** The California ACOEM Guidelines recommend that a Corticosteroid injection is an option in treating knee disorders. Turning to the Official Disability Guidelines, they only recommend that the steroid injection is for "short term use only." Clinical recommendations for use in the osteoarthritic knee are noted only for short-term benefit. The medical records in this case describe a chronic course of care with recent imaging failing to demonstrate specific diagnostic pathology. The medical records also do not identify conservative treatment offered for the employee's symptoms. Given lack of documentation of the employee's prior conservative treatment to date, the acute need of a corticosteroid injection at this stage in the course of care would not be indicated.

**KNEE BRACE:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation OFFICIAL DISABILITY GUIDELINES (ODG).

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 13 Knee Complaints Page(s): 340.

**Decision rationale:** The California ACOEM Guidelines only recommend the use of bracing with documented instability of the medial collateral ligament or anterior cruciate ligament. The need for bracing given the employee's documented history of knee pain with normal radiographic imaging would not be indicated at this chronic stage in course of care.