

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0007251		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	02/12/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	02/02/2013
<b>Decision Date:</b>	06/24/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	01/02/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	01/20/2014

### 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 wrist pain and carpal tunnel syndrome reportedly associated with an industrial injury of February 2, 2013. Thus far, the applicant has been treated with analgesic medications, consultation with a hand surgeon, who has apparently endorsed a carpal tunnel release surgery and unspecified amounts of acupuncture and physical therapy over the life of the claim. In a utilization review report dated January 2, 2014, the claims administrator denied a request for a preoperative medical clearance, citing non-MTUS Guidelines on preoperative testing. The applicant's attorney subsequently appealed. On January 16, 2014, the applicant's hand surgeon stated that the applicant was in the process of pursuing a carpal tunnel release surgery under general anesthesia. The applicant seemingly sought authorization for preoperative evaluation. In an earlier note of December 19, 2013, the applicant's hand surgeon writes that the applicant is having issues with anxiety and that the applicant would like to undergo carpal tunnel release surgery under general anesthesia. The attending provider writes that it is not reasonable that the utilization reviewer is interjecting his preferences on how the applicant should be cared for.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**PRE -OP MEDICAL CLEARANCE:** Overturned

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation National Guideline Clearinghouse.

**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: Medscape, Preoperative Evaluation and Management.  
<http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/1127055-overview>

**Decision rationale:** The California MTUS does not address the topic. However, as noted by the [REDACTED], the additional time invested in a preoperative evaluation, yields an improved physician and patient relationship, and reduces surgical complications. In this case, the applicant's hand surgeon has posited that the applicant has issues with anxiety, which are impacting the choice of anesthesia. A preoperative evaluation/medical clearance evaluation presumably with an anesthesiologist, to determine the form of anesthesia that will be employed, is indicated, appropriate, and supported by [REDACTED]. Therefore, the request is medically necessary.