

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|------------------------------|------------|
| Case Number: | CM14-0100649 | | |
| Date Assigned: | 09/16/2014 | Date of Injury: | 09/15/1995 |
| Decision Date: | 12/02/2014 | UR Denial Date: | 06/10/2014 |
| Priority: | Standard | Application Received: | 06/30/2014 |

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 Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, has a subspecialty in Pain 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:

This is a patient with a date of injury of 9/15/95. A utilization review determination dated 6/10/14 recommends non-certification of work hardening. 6/4/14 medical report identifies that the patient is s/p bilateral unicompartmental knee replacement and the right knee has responded well with PT. The physical therapist recommended work conditioning; however, the provider then noted a recommendation for work hardening x 10 sessions.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Work Hardening x10 visits 4xweek one week, 4xweek two and 2x week3: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Knee work conditioning.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 125-6 of 127. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Knee Chapter, Work conditioning, work hardening

Decision rationale: Regarding the request for work hardening, Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines state that work hardening may be an option when functional limitations preclude the ability to safely achieve current job demands which are in the medium or higher demand level (not sedentary work). A functional capacity evaluation may be required showing consistent

results with maximal effort, demonstrating capacities below an employer verified physical demands analysis. After treatment with an adequate trial of physical therapy or occupational therapy with improvement followed by plateau, but not likely to benefit from continued physical or occupational therapy or general conditioning. Additionally, the patient must have achieved sufficient recovery to allow for a minimum of 4 hours a day 3 to 5 days per week as well as having a defined return to work goal agreed to by the employer and employee. Specific to work conditioning, it is noted to be an additional series of intensive physical therapy (PT) visits required beyond a normal course of PT, primarily for exercise training/supervision. Within the documentation available for review, it appears that the intention was to send the patient to work conditioning rather than work hardening, as work conditioning is what was apparently recommended by the physical therapist. Additionally, none of the criteria outlined above have been met. Unfortunately, although it appears that the request for work hardening rather than work conditioning was in error and the patient appears to meet the criteria for work conditioning, there is no provision for modification of the current request to allow for work conditioning rather than work hardening. In light of the above issues, the currently requested work hardening is not medically necessary.