

Case Number:	CM14-0104168		
Date Assigned:	07/30/2014	Date of Injury:	03/08/2011
Decision Date:	09/19/2014	UR Denial Date:	07/03/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	07/07/2014

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 claimant was injured on 03/08/11. A request for an internal medicine consult and dermatology consult are under review. He has a diagnosis of lumbar sprain with discogenic and facet syndrome and SI joint arthropathy. He also had major depression and adjustment disorder with depressed and anxious mood. He has been prescribed Remeron and Paxil. Internal medicine and dermatology consultations are under review. He reported on 05/10/14 that he had low back pain radiating to the left lower extremity. He was given medications. He had a psychiatric progress report on 06/20/14 and felt better with improvement in his depression and anxiety. He was to continue Remeron and Paxil. He was very concerned about skin changes and he stated his hair loss was excessive. The skin pigmentation was not very evident. His laboratory results were unremarkable. There was a decline in sleep, energy, appetite and libido. He reportedly was approved for an internal medicine evaluation on 06/12/14. The results of this consultation are not known. He had an appointment with [REDACTED] on 05/30/14. A dermatology consultation was recommended. [REDACTED] recommended a full medical evaluation to rule out potential organic etiologies underlying his mood and somatic symptoms. On 06/20/14, he stated his medications were helpful. His memory and forgetfulness were improving. He was still concerned about his skin changes and hair loss. The same consultations were ordered again.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

CONSULT: INTERNAL MEDICINE: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ACOEM CHAPTER 7, PAGE 127.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM), 2nd Edition, (2004): Chapter 7, Independent Medical Examinations and Consultations, page 127 Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine textbook.

Decision rationale: The history and documentation do not objectively support the request for an Internal Medicine consultation at this time. The MTUS state "if a diagnosis is uncertain or complex, if psychosocial factors are present, or if the plan or course of care may benefit from additional expertise, the occupational health physician may refer a patient to other specialists for an independent medical assessment." Harrison's textbook recommends medical evaluations when symptoms and physical findings reveal abnormalities that require a workup. In this case, there is no documentation of any chronic medical conditions in the patient's history and it is not clear what kinds of disorders may need to be ruled out. The medical necessity of this request for an Internal Medicine consultation has not been clearly demonstrated.

DERMATHOLOGY CONSULT: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ACOEM CHAPTER 7, PAGE 127.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM), Chapter 7, page 127.

Decision rationale: The history and documentation do not objectively support the request for a Dermatology consultation at this time. The MTUS state "if a diagnosis is uncertain or complex, if psychosocial factors are present, or if the plan or course of care may benefit from additional expertise, the occupational health physician may refer a patient to other specialists for an independent medical assessment." In this case, the claimant's complaints about his skin are barely noticeable and it is not clear why a specialist consultation has been requested. There is no documentation of other medical conditions in the patient's history and it is not clear what kinds of disorders may need to be ruled out. The medical necessity of this request for a Dermatology consultation has not been clearly demonstrated.