

Case Number:	CM14-0107967		
Date Assigned:	08/01/2014	Date of Injury:	01/14/2009
Decision Date:	09/26/2014	UR Denial Date:	06/26/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	07/11/2014

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 Family Medicine and is licensed to practice in North Carolina. 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 had an original date of injury of 1/14/2009. He is seen for ongoing management of back pain. Previous treatment has included lumbar spine surgery in 2011, oral pain medications, physical therapy and epidural steroid injections. He participating in a home exercise program. The request if for 12 session of aquatic therapy.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

(12) Aquatic Therapy sessions for the lower back: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Aquatic therapy and Physical Medicine.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines aquatic therapy Page(s): 22.

Decision rationale: CA MTUS states that aquatic therapy is a reasonable alternative to land based therapy especially in cases where avoidance of the effects of gravity may be beneficial, as in cases of extreme obesity. The medical records in this case document no intolerance of land based physical therapy and in fact state that the claimant is actively participating in a land based home exercise program. Aquatic therapy is not medically necessary.