

Case Number:	CM14-0014409		
Date Assigned:	02/28/2014	Date of Injury:	09/08/2010
Decision Date:	06/27/2014	UR Denial Date:	01/17/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	02/05/2014

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 Clinical Psychology 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:

Based on the records provided for this independent review, this is a 60 year old male who reported an occupational / industrial work-related injury 5/14/13 when he was standing on a netting while unwrapping merchandise on a pallet and a coworker who operated forklift pulled the net causing the patient to fall backwards, hitting his head against the floor very hard and injuring his back and neck. There was likely a concussion and now post-concussion syndrome. A request for four sessions of psychotherapy was made and non-certified due to insufficient documentation of psychological distress to substantiate medical necessity. The patient has medical complaints of constant headache, and neck pain radiating down his arms and hands with numbness and tingling in both the arms and hands. There is also a continuous nagging pain in the mid, upper, and lower back, at times sharp, traveling bilaterally to the legs and feet. Patient has been diagnosed with cervical sprain and strain and cervical radiculopathy shoulder impingement an additional medical diagnoses specified in his chart.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

PSYCHOTHERAPY: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation MTUS: CHRONIC PAIN MEDICAL TREATMENT GUIDELINES , PART TWO, BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS, COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY, 23-24

Decision rationale: According to the MTUS guidelines, cognitive behavioral therapy for depression is indicated as a recommended treatment approach. An initial trial of 3-4 sessions should be offered and subsequent sessions based documented functional objective improvements result as by product of the therapy. If progress is being made, and is documented, 13 to 20 sessions can be offered. This patient reports significant difficulties with daily activities such as sitting, standing, stair climbing, lifting, pushing and pulling and has almost constant headaches. The patient is having difficulty sleeping and maintaining sleep even when he does fall asleep resulting in severe fatigue. His medical chart indicates that the patient is in medical emotional distress and has depression. It is also been noted in that he probably is having post-concussion syndrome. He is complaining of anxiety and stress due to his not being able to function as he used to. After a careful comprehensive review of the medical charts, the patient does appear to have significant psychological symptoms and psychological treatment appears medically necessary. Because the patient is Spanish speaking it would be very helpful to find a [REDACTED] speaking therapist to conduct the therapy, if possible. At this juncture it is medically necessary and appropriate to offer this patient appropriate therapy for the psychological consequences of his work related injury.