

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0123254		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	08/11/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	09/02/2009
<b>Decision Date:</b>	09/18/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	07/10/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	08/04/2014

### 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 Neuromuscular Medicine and is licensed to practice in Maryland. 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 patient is a 44 year old with a work injury dated 9/2/09. The diagnoses include status post arthroscopic basal joint arthroplasty of the thumb joint. Under consideration is a request for OT 1-2 X 12 weeks - Left thumb. The documentation indicates that the patient has had 12 sessions of occupational therapy. There is an orthopedic progress note from the patient's physician report dated 6/6/14 that states that the patient is now 9 weeks postop. She has been in therapy. The night pain, numbness and tingling have resolved. The patient, however, has continued soreness in her hand, with stiffness and some altered sensibility in the the index and middle fingers. On exam there is tenderness over the finger flexors in the palm, and lumbar tenderness well. There is subjectively decreased sensibility in the index and middle fingers, with pseudomotor function and 2 point discrimination present. There is tenderness over the scars in the palm and at the wrist. The fingertips lack the distal palm by 1 cm. There is mildly decreased wrist motion. There is full left thumb motion but tenderness over the thumb at the carpometacarpal joint. The impression is post op stiffness and weakness. The treatment plan states that the patient remains, stiff weakened symptomatic, postoperatively. She has improved with therapy but her postoperative recovery has been slow. There is a request for an additional 12 therapy visits. The patient is not presently working. The patient has a history of left thumb arthritis. This was treated surgically. Her recent surgery on the right side has caused a flare-up on the left, as she is in a position to overuse the left hand. Conservative treatment would include therapy which could be done in conjunction with the therapy for the right side.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**OT 1-2 X 12 weeks - Left thumb:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 98-99.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines physical medicine p. 98-99 Page(s): p. 98-99, Postsurgical Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 19.

**Decision rationale:** OT 1-2 X 12 weeks - Left thumb is not medically necessary. The documentation is not clear on the date of her prior left thumb surgery and how much therapy she has had in the past. The documentation is not clear on the outcome of prior therapy. Without this information additional therapy cannot be recommended. Beyond the post surgical period the guidelines recommend up to 10 visits for this condition. The request exceeds this number of visits. The request for OT 1-2 X 12 weeks - Left thumb is not medically necessary.