

Case Number:	CM14-0132645		
Date Assigned:	08/22/2014	Date of Injury:	03/13/2014
Decision Date:	10/02/2014	UR Denial Date:	07/18/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	08/19/2014

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 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 26-year-old male who reported an industrial injury to the right index finger on 3/13/2013, 18 months ago, attributed to the performance of his usual and customary job tasks. The patient sustained a traumatic amputation to the right index finger and on 3/20/2014; the patient underwent a revision amputation of his right index finger from a traumatic amputation. The patient was provided 28 sessions of postoperative rehabilitation PT. The patient was prescribed an additional 16 sessions of physical therapy to the right index finger status post amputation revision.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Physical Therapy Right Index Finger x 16: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 11 Forearm, Wrist, and Hand Complaints.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 11 Forearm, Wrist, and Hand Complaints Page(s): 265, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines physical medicine Page(s): 98, 99. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) forearm, wrist, and hand chapter-physical/Occupational Therapy

Decision rationale: The request for additional postoperative PT of 16 sessions in addition to the 28 post operative sessions already provided is not supported with objective evidence and is not demonstrated to be medically necessary for the rehabilitation of the right hand index finger post operatively. The patient has received more than the number of sessions of PT recommended by the CA MTUS for cited surgical intervention with partial index finger amputation with demonstrated functional improvement. The request exceeds the number of sessions recommended by the CA MTUS for the post operative rehabilitation of the fingers. There is no objective evidence provided by the treating physician to preclude the patient from participating in a self-directed home exercise program. The patient has exceeded the 10-week time interval recommended by the CA MTUS for postoperative PT/OT. The request for an additional 16 sessions of PT/OT for rehabilitation of the index finger s/p amputation of the distal finger exceeds the CA MTUS recommended number of sessions of PT. The request exceeds the number of PT sessions recommended by the applicable evidence based guidelines. The patient is demonstrated to be improving prior subsequent to the procedure and should be in a self-directed home exercise program. The treating physician did not provide additional evidence to support additional PT/OT to override the evidence-based guidelines and failed to demonstrate that the patient was participating in exercises on his own. The CA MTUS recommend up to eighteen (18) sessions of physical therapy for the rehabilitation of partial digit amputations over six (6) weeks with integration into a home exercise program. The exercises for the treatment of the fingers and hands are easily performed at home and are learned in on a few sessions of PT. The patient is over the ten-week postoperative time interval recommended for rehabilitation.