

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0151076		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	09/26/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	02/18/2011
<b>Decision Date:</b>	11/18/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	09/15/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	09/16/2014

### 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 Orthopedic Surgery, 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 59 year old female claimant has reported industrial injury of 2/18/11. AME report from 11/11/13 demonstrates claimant has degenerative joint disease of bilateral knees, right greater than left. Radiographs demonstrate collapse of the medial compartment. Exam of 8/4/2014 demonstrates complaints of increasing symptoms to bilateral knees. Subjectively it is noted the claimant is worsening in the right knee is now worse than left. MRI left knee from 7/11/2013 demonstrates severe medial compartment chondromalacia and severe trochlear chondromalacia. The claimant is status post Synvisc one viscosupplementation to the left knee on 7/30/2013 without relief of symptoms. Request is made for left knee diagnostic and operative arthroscopy secondary to the claimant's young and active age.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Preoperative Medical Clearance:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG-TWC), Preoperative Testing (Last Updated 05/10/13)

**MAXIMUS guideline:** The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence: <http://www.brighamandwomens.org/gms/Medical/preopprotocols.aspx>

**Decision rationale:** CA MTUS and ODG are silent on the issue of preoperative clearance. Alternative guidelines were therefore referenced:<http://www.brighamandwomens.org/gms/Medical/preopprotocols.aspx> States that patients greater than age 40 require a CBC; males require an ECG if greater than 40 and female is greater than age 50; this is for any type of surgery. In this case the claimant is 59 years old and does not have any evidence in the cited records from 8/4/14 of significant medical comorbidities to support a need for preoperative clearance or laboratory testing. Therefore, request for Preoperative Medical Clearance is not medically necessary.

**Preoperative lab prothrombin time (PT) /partial thromboplastin time (PTT):** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG-TWC), Preoperative Testing (Last Updated 05/10/13)

**MAXIMUS guideline:** The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence: <http://www.brighamandwomens.org/gms/Medical/preopprotocols.aspx>

**Decision rationale:** CA MTUS and ODG are silent on the issue of preoperative clearance. Alternative guidelines were therefore referenced:<http://www.brighamandwomens.org/gms/Medical/preopprotocols.aspx> States that patients greater than age 40 require a CBC; males require an ECG if greater than 40 and female is greater than age 50; this is for any type of surgery. In this case the claimant is 59 years old and does not have any evidence in the cited records from 8/4/14 of significant medical comorbidities to support a need for preoperative clearance or laboratory testing. Therefore, the request for Preoperative lab prothrombin time (PT) /partial thromboplastin time (PTT) is not medically necessary.

**Preoperative labs hepatitis (HEP) panel:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG-TWC), Preoperative Testing (Last Updated 05/10/13)

**MAXIMUS guideline:** The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence: <http://www.brighamandwomens.org/gms/Medical/preopprotocols.aspx>

**Decision rationale:** CA MTUS and ODG are silent on the issue of preoperative clearance. Alternative guidelines were therefore referenced:<http://www.brighamandwomens.org/gms/Medical/preopprotocols.aspx> States that patients greater than age 40 require a CBC; males require an ECG if greater than 40 and female is greater than age 50; this is for any type of surgery. In this case the claimant is 59 years old and does not have any evidence in the cited records from 8/4/14 of significant medical comorbidities

to support a need for preoperative clearance or laboratory testing. Therefore, request for Preoperative labs Hepatitis (HEP) panel is not medically necessary.

**Preoperative labs HIV panel:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG-TWC), Preoperative Testing (Last Updated 05/10/13)

**MAXIMUS guideline:** The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence: <http://www.brighamandwomens.org/gms/Medical/preopprotocols.aspx>

**Decision rationale:** CA MTUS and ODG are silent on the issue of preoperative clearance. Alternative guidelines were therefore referenced:<http://www.brighamandwomens.org/gms/Medical/preopprotocols.aspx> States that patients greater than age 40 require a CBC; males require an ECG if greater than 40 and female is greater than age 50; this is for any type of surgery. In this case the claimant is 59 years old and does not have any evidence in the cited records from 8/4/14 of significant medical comorbidities to support a need for preoperative clearance or laboratory testing. Therefore, the request for Preoperative labs (HIV) panel is not medically necessary.

**Assistant Surgeon:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Milliman Care Guidelines, Assistant Surgeon Guidelines American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons. Position Statement Reimbursement of the First Assistant at Surgery in Orthopaedics Role of first assistant

**MAXIMUS guideline:** The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence: 1. <http://www.aaos.org/about/papers/position/1120.asp>

**Decision rationale:** CA MTUS/ACOEM/ODG are silent on the issue of assistant surgeon. According to the American College of Surgeons: "The first assistant to the surgeon during a surgical operation should be a trained individual capable of participating and actively assisting the surgeon to establish a good working team. The first assistant provides aid in exposure, hemostasis, and other technical function which will help the surgeon carry out a safe operation and optimal results for the patient. The role will vary considerably with the surgical operation, specialty area, and type of hospital." There is no indication for an assistant surgeon for a routine arthroscopy. The guidelines state that "the more complex or risky the operation, the more highly trained the first assistant should be." In this case an Assistant Surgeon is not medically necessary.

**Knee brace (rental or purchase):** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 13 Knee Complaints Page(s): 340. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG-TWC), Knee and Leg Procedure Summary (last updated 03/31/14), Criteria for the use of Knee Braces

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 13 Knee Complaints Page(s): 340.

**Decision rationale:** CA MTUS / ACOEM Chapter 13 Knee complaints, page 340 states that a brace can be used for patellar instability, anterior cruciate ligament tear, or medial collateral ligament instability although its benefits may be more emotional than medical. According to the ODG, Knee chapter, Knee brace section, knee braces may be appropriate in patients with one of the following conditions: knee instability, ligament insufficiency/deficiency, reconstructed ligament, articular defect repair, avascular necrosis, and specific surgical interventions. The cited medical records from 8/4/14 demonstrate the claimant is not experiencing specific laxity, instability, and ligament issues or has undergone surgical intervention. Therefore, the request for durable medical equipment, Knee Brace, is not medically necessary and appropriate.

**Preoperative labs urinalysis (UA):** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG-TWC), Preoperative Testing (Last Updated 05/10/13)

**MAXIMUS guideline:** The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence: <http://www.brighamandwomens.org/gms/Medical/preopprotocols.aspx>

**Decision rationale:** CA MTUS and ODG are silent on the issue of preoperative clearance. Alternative guidelines were therefore referenced:<http://www.brighamandwomens.org/gms/Medical/preopprotocols.aspx> States that patients greater than age 40 require a CBC; males require an ECG if greater than 40 and female is greater than age 50; this is for any type of surgery. In this case the claimant is 59 years old and does not have any evidence in the cited records from 8/4/14 of significant medical comorbidities to support a need for preoperative clearance or laboratory testing. Therefore, Preoperative labs urinalysis (UA) is not medically necessary.

**Preoperative labs EKG (echocardiogram):** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG-TWC), Preoperative Testing (Last Updated 05/10/13), Preoperative electrocardiogram

**MAXIMUS guideline:** The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence: <http://www.brighamandwomens.org/gms/Medical/preopprotocols.aspx>

**Decision rationale:** CA MTUS and ODG are silent on the issue of preoperative clearance. Alternative guidelines were therefore referenced:<http://www.brighamandwomens.org/gms/Medical/preopprotocols.aspx> States that patients greater than age 40 require a CBC; males require an ECG if greater than 40 and female is greater than age 50; this is for any type of surgery. In this case the claimant is 59 years old and does not have any evidence in the cited records from 8/4/14 of significant medical comorbidities to support a need for preoperative clearance or laboratory testing. Therefore, Preoperative EKG is not medically necessary.

**Preoperative chest x-ray:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG-TWC), Preoperative Testing (Last Updated 05/10/13)

**MAXIMUS guideline:** The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence: <http://www.brighamandwomens.org/gms/Medical/preopprotocols.aspx>

**Decision rationale:** CA MTUS and ODG are silent on the issue of preoperative clearance. Alternative guidelines were therefore referenced.<http://www.brighamandwomens.org/gms/Medical/preopprotocols.aspx> States that patients greater than age 40 require a CBC; males require an ECG if greater than 40 and female is greater than age 50; this is for any type of surgery. In this case the claimant is 59 years old and does not have any evidence in the cited records from 8/4/14 of significant medical comorbidities to support a need for preoperative clearance or laboratory testing. Therefore, Preoperative Chest X-Ray is not medically necessary.