

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0156840		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	09/26/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	01/12/2009
<b>Decision Date:</b>	11/24/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	09/12/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	09/24/2014

### 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, and is licensed to practice in Texas. 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:

Medical records reflect the claimant is a 42 year old male who sustained a work injury on 1-12-09. The claimant underwent a replacement spinal cord battery on 4-21-14. The claimant has low back pain and left leg pain. Psychological evaluation showed moderately high Beck depression score of 28 and continued suicidal thoughts with no plan to act on them. Psychiatric progress note on 9-12-14 reflect the diagnosis of Major depressive disorder, chronic pain syndrome.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Functional Restoration Program to help patient increase function & mobility daily (monday- friday) x 6 weeks:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines FRP Page(s): 49. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Chronic pain chapter - functional restoration program

**Decision rationale:** Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines notes that FRP are recommended for selected patients with chronic disabling pain, although research is still ongoing

as to how to most appropriately screen for inclusion in these programs. Functional restoration programs (FRPs), a type of treatment included in the category of interdisciplinary pain programs (see Chronic pain programs), were originally developed by Mayer and Gatchel. FRPs were designed to use a medically directed, interdisciplinary pain management approach geared specifically to patients with chronic disabling occupational musculoskeletal disorders. These programs emphasize the importance of function over the elimination of pain. FRPs incorporate components of exercise progression with disability management and psychosocial intervention. Long-term evidence suggests that the benefit of these programs diminishes over time, but still remains positive when compared to cohorts that did not receive an intensive program. (Bendix, 1998) A Cochrane review suggests that there is strong evidence that intensive multidisciplinary rehabilitation with functional restoration reduces pain and improves function of patients with low back pain. The evidence is contradictory when evaluating the programs in terms of vocational outcomes. (Guzman 2001) It must be noted that all studies used for the Cochrane review excluded individuals with extensive radiculopathy, and several of the studies excluded patients who were receiving a pension, limiting the generalizability of the above results. Studies published after the Cochrane review also indicate that intensive programs show greater effectiveness, in particular in terms of return to work, than less intensive treatment. (Airaksinen, 2006) There appears to be little scientific evidence for the effectiveness of multidisciplinary biopsychosocial rehabilitation compared with other rehabilitation facilities for neck and shoulder pain, as opposed to low back pain and generalized pain syndromes. (Karjalainen, 2003) Treatment is not suggested for longer than 2 weeks without evidence of demonstrated efficacy as documented by subjective and objective gains. The claimant has had psychological evaluation noting that this claimant has major depressive disorder. However, there is an absence in documentation noting complete evaluation to include a Functional Capacity Evaluation. There is also an absence of through evaluation noting that this claimant would be a good candidate. Additionally, current treatment guidelines supports requests in hours not weeks. Therefore, the medical necessity of this request is not established.