

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0159561		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	10/03/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	04/08/2012
<b>Decision Date:</b>	12/08/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	09/16/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	09/29/2014

### 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 Occupational 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:

The application for independent medical review was for physical therapy three times a week for four weeks to the neck. It was signed on September 24, 2014. There was a peer review from September 15, 2014. Per the records provided, the patient is described as a 34-year-old female injured on April 8, 2012 with injury to the shoulder. She had occasional mild discomfort at the right shoulder but she was reportedly functioning well. The exam showed a negative Spurling's test with no focal neurologic deficit. There is full range of motion in both shoulders and negative impingement signs. The claimant had a right shoulder decompression in 2013 followed by manipulation of the shoulder on January 14, 2014 with a secondary neck strain that is mild. The patient has had extensive physical therapy and chiropractic care for the chronic condition without subjective or objective benefits noted. The status of the home exercise program was not clear.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Physical Therapy 3 x 4 to the neck:** Upheld

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

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 98 of 127.

**Decision rationale:** The MTUS does permit physical therapy in chronic situations, noting that one should allow for fading of treatment frequency (from up to 3 visits per week to 1 or less), plus active self-directed home Physical Medicine. The conditions mentioned are Myalgia and myositis, unspecified (ICD9 729.1): 9-10 visits over 8 weeks; Neuralgia, neuritis, and radiculitis, unspecified (ICD9 729.2) 8-10 visits over 4 weeks; and Reflex sympathetic dystrophy (CRPS) (ICD9 337.2): 24 visits over 16 weeks. This claimant does not have these conditions. And, after several documented sessions of therapy, it is not clear why the patient would not be independent with self-care at this point. Also, there are especially strong caveats in the MTUS/ACOEM guidelines against over treatment in the chronic situation supporting the clinical notion that the move to independence and an active, independent home program is clinically in the best interest of the patient. They cite: 1. Although mistreating or under treating pain is of concern, an even greater risk for the physician is over treating the chronic pain patient...Over treatment often results in irreparable harm to the patient's socioeconomic status, home life, personal relationships, and quality of life in general. 2. A patient's complaints of pain should be acknowledged. Patient and clinician should remain focused on the ultimate goal of rehabilitation leading to optimal functional recovery, decreased healthcare utilization, and maximal self actualization. The request for Physical Therapy 3 x4 are not medically necessary.