

Case Number:	CM14-0174923		
Date Assigned:	10/28/2014	Date of Injury:	02/19/2014
Decision Date:	12/04/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/02/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/22/2014

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 Minnesota. 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 injured worker is a 37 year old male who initially injured his left knee in the year 2001. There is a history of continuing knee issues including anterior cruciate ligament deficiency and lateral meniscal tear for which arthroscopically assisted surgical reconstruction of the ACL was performed on 02/20/2014 using a hamstring autograft. Partial lateral meniscectomy was also performed. Post-operatively the worker had difficulty with pain and his knee became stiff. Attempts to regain motion were not successful and he underwent a second surgical procedure consisting of debridement of excessive scar tissue from the notch and manipulation of the knee under anesthesia on 9/11/2014. He started physical therapy the next day. Significant gains have been documented with improvement of the range of motion from 12-81 degrees on 9/12/2014 to 4-115 degrees on 10/02/2014. However, there was continued weakness, extensor lag on heel strike and difficulty with getting in and out of cars and using the stairs due to muscle atrophy and weakness. On 10/02/2014 he had completed 15 sessions per PT notes. Additional 5x3 physical therapy was requested and 2x3 authorized by UR. This will add another 6 visits with a total of 21 visits. The disputed issue pertains to continued post-operative physical therapy of the left knee. The number of visits or the time period is not specified in the request.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Continued post operative physical therapy of the left knee: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Postsurgical Treatment Guidelines.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Postsurgical Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 10,11,25.

Decision rationale: The Post-surgical treatment guidelines recommend a general course of therapy of 20 visits over 4 months for manipulation of the knee under anesthesia on page 25. Half of that is 10 visits. The initial course of therapy is 10 visits and if functional improvement is demonstrated this could be extended to 20 visits. If it is demonstrated that additional functional improvement can be expected after completion of the 20 visits it could be further extended with a maximum physical medicine period of 6 months for this diagnosis. There was continuing functional improvement after the initial 10 visits and it was extended to 15 visits which were completed on 10/2/2014. UR has authorized 2x3 additional physical therapy after 10/02/2014. After this has been completed it could be extended further if additional functional gains are expected. It may then be transitioned to a home exercise program. The IMR request as stated is for continued post-operative physical therapy of the knee. The number of visits or the time period is not specified. Therefore the request as stated is not medically necessary per guidelines.