

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0029905		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	06/20/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	12/03/2012
<b>Decision Date:</b>	09/11/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	02/11/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	03/10/2014

### 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:

This case involves a 33 year old injured worker who sustained an injury on 12/3/2012. The mechanism of injury was not noted. In a progress noted dated 1/30/2014, the subjective findings included weakness and pain in left knee as well as feelings of instability about the knee cap. On the physical exam dated 1/30/2014, the objective findings included tenderness to the patellar tendon insertion at the tibial aspect, and medial riding patella with knee extension. The diagnostic impression shows chondromalacia of patella. The treatment to date includes medication therapy, behavioral modification, physical therapy, and arthroscopy on left knee 8/2/2013. A UR decision dated 2/11/2014, denied the request for work conditioning 2 times a week for 4 weeks for left knee, stating that there is no report of an employer-employee return to work agreement. In addition, the patient has had knee surgery and has completed physical therapy, but is seeking "medical retirement." Medical necessity is not met for work conditioning without clear intention of returning to work.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Work Conditioning 2 times a week for 4 weeks for the left knee:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Work Conditioning, work hardening. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG)- Work Conditioning.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) knee.

**Decision rationale:** The MTUS guideline does not address this issue. Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Work Conditioning (WC), Physical Therapy (PT) guidelines, state that WC amounts to an additional series of intensive physical therapy visits required beyond a normal course of PT, primarily for exercise training and supervision. WC visits will typically be more intensive than regular PT visits, lasting 2 or 3 times as long. In addition, as with all physical therapy programs, work conditioning participation does not preclude concurrently being at work. Official Disability Guidelines supports 10 visits over 4 weeks, equivalent up to 30 hrs. In a progress report dated 1/30/2014, the patient is noted to be totally and temporarily disabled and is noted to be seeking medical retirement. In the reports reviewed, it is unclear what the objective functional goals are for this request. Furthermore, it appears that the motivational issues and the plans for returning to work would need to be further addressed to justify work conditioning. Therefore, the request for work conditioning Work conditioning 2 times a week for 4 weeks for the left knee is not medically necessary.