

Case Number:	CM14-0030601		
Date Assigned:	06/20/2014	Date of Injury:	06/04/2012
Decision Date:	08/29/2014	UR Denial Date:	02/14/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	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:

The applicant is a represented [REDACTED] employee who has filed a claim for chronic low back pain reportedly associated with an industrial injury of June 4, 2012. Thus far, the applicant has been treated with the following: Analgesic medications; attorney representation; earlier lumbar MRI imaging, apparently notable for a 4-mm disk bulge at L5-S1; consultation with a neurosurgeon, who declined to intervene operatively; initial return to regular work; and subsequently imposition of work restrictions. In a Utilization Review Report dated February 14, 2014, the claims administrator denied a request for MRI imaging of the pelvis, citing non-MTUS ODG Guidelines. The applicant's attorney subsequently appealed. On September 13, 2013, it was suggested that the applicant could continue performing his regular duty as a route sales representative at Pepsi. The applicant was given an 8% whole-person impairment rating. Electrodiagnostic testing of the same date, September 13, 2013, was reportedly normal. In a February 28, 2014 Neurology Medical-Legal Evaluation, it was opined that the applicant's tremors were non-industrial phenomenon, unrelated to the industrial injury. In a psychiatric Medical-Legal Evaluation of February 28, 2014, the applicant acknowledged that he had been off of work since beginning of February 2014, owing to issues associated with depression, anxiety, and altered mood. Authorization for hip MRI imaging was apparently subsequently sought.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

MRI Pelvis: 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) The Hip and Pelvis-MRI.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ACOEM Practice Guidelines, Third Edition, Hip and Groin Chapter, MRI section.

Decision rationale: The MTUS does not address the topic of pelvic MRI imaging. As noted in the Third Edition ACOEM Guidelines, MRI imaging is not recommended in the routine evaluation of chronic hip joint pathology. While ACOEM does support some limited role for hip MRI imaging to evaluate or diagnose issues such as osteonecrosis and/or avascular necrosis after first-line plain films are proven negative, in this case, however, no clear rationale for the MRI study in question was proffered by the attending provider. It was not clearly stated what was sought or what was suspected. The bulk of the applicant's symptoms, furthermore, are seemingly localizable to the lumbar spine. There was comparatively little or no mention made of hip issues. There was no evidence that the applicant had had recent hip or pelvic plain film imaging before the MRI study in question was considered. Therefore, the request for MRI Pelvis is not medically necessary.