

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0041467		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	09/12/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	09/01/2012
<b>Decision Date:</b>	10/20/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	03/25/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	04/08/2014

### 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 & Rehabilitation, has a subspecialty in Interventional Spine 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 patient is a 47 year old with an injury date on 9/1/12. The patient complains of improving right knee pain following surgery, and increased pain at the quadriceps with swelling per 3/11/14 report. The patient states that some exercises while in physical therapy aggravated her condition per 3/11/14 report. Based on the 3/11/14 progress report provided by [REDACTED] the diagnoses are: 1. medial meniscectomy right knee 2. medial compartment arthritis s/p chondroplasty of the medial femoral condyle, loose body removal. Exam on 3/11/14 showed "right knee swelling/tenderness. Range of motion is full for the right knee." [REDACTED] is requesting one series of euflexxa injections under ultrasound guidance right knee x 3. The utilization review determination being challenged is dated 3/25/14. [REDACTED] is the requesting provider, and he provided treatment reports from 8/23/13 to 3/11/14.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**One Series of Euflexxa Injections under Ultrasound Guidance Right Knee x 3: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ODG(The Official Disability Guidelines)-TWC Knee and Leg Procedure

**MAXIMUS guideline:** The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ODG-TWC guideline has the following regarding hyaluronic acid injections: (<http://www.odg-twc.com/odgtwc/knee.htm#Hyaluronicacidinjections>) Recommended as a possible option for severe osteoarthritis for patients who have not responded adequately to recommended conservative treatments (exercise, NSAIDs or acetaminophen), to potentially delay total knee replacement, but in recent quality studies the magnitude of improvement appears modest at best.

**Decision rationale:** The patient previously had a series of three Euflexxa injections without benefit per 3/11/14 report, but the treater states that pain relief was not significant because the patient was dealing with chondroplasty, removal of loose bodies, and partial medial meniscectomy instead of just the arthritis. Regarding hyaluronic acid injections, the ODG recommends as a possible option for severe osteoarthritis for patients who have not responded adequately to recommended conservative treatments (exercise, NSAIDs or acetaminophen), to potentially delay total knee replacement. In this case, the request is for a repeat injection but there is no documentation of functional improvement from the prior injection. There is no documentation of "severe arthritis," as required by the ODG for these injections. As such, the request is not medically necessary and appropriate.