MAXIMUS Federal Services

Case Number:	CM14-0064286		
Date Assigned:	07/11/2014	Date of Injury:	10/10/2013
Decision Date:	09/11/2014	UR Denial Date:	04/24/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	05/07/2014

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 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 is a 43-year-old female who sustained a vocational injury on 10/10/13. On 01/20/14 the claimant underwent a left knee arthroscopy with lateral meniscal debridement and chondroplasty of the lateral femoral condyle, chondroplasty of the patella, and limited debridement of the ACL. The claimant was noted to have Grade II to mild Grade IV chondromalacia of the patella. The claimant's current working diagnosis includes knee injury (derangement of the knee) and medication agreement. Most recent office note available for review from 04/20/14 noted that the claimant continued to have swelling and pain. She was noted to have lots of fluid draining from her knee and then subsequent injection provided. It was recommended that she stay off work until she could have more fluid drained and was to be given another injection. On exam she was noted to have improved edema within the knee. The claimant was noted to be on narcotics and arthritis medication and had an allergy to NSAIDs. Postoperatively she was noted to have attended four of eight physical therapy sessions. The current request is for a left knee Synvisc injection, times one.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Synvisc Injection x1 to Left Knee: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines - Knee Chapter, Hyaluronic Acid Injections.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines, Treatment in Worker's Comp 18th edition, 2013 Updates, Knee Chapter, Criteria for Hyaluronic acid injections.

Decision rationale: California MTUS ACOEM guidelines are silent and subsequently Official Disability Guidelines have been referenced. Official Disability Guidelines note that prior to considering viscosupplementation therapy individuals should be older than 50 years of age, failed to adequately respond to an aspiration and injection and intra-articular steroid, have appropriately documented subjective complaints and abnormal physical exam objective findings, and have either previously noted intraoperative findings consistent with end stage degenerative joint disease or radiographic imaging consistent with degenerative joint disease. Currently documentation suggests the claimant is under the age of 50, and has no recent radiographic findings suggesting end stage degenerative joint disease. Intraoperative findings reported that the claimant had Grade III to mild Grade IV chondromalacia of the patella but the medial and lateral compartments were not graded in regards to arthritic findings. Documentation also suggests the recent aspiration and injection provided the patient with a moderate amount of relief and she was awaiting a repeat aspiration and injection with Corticosteroids. Currently viscosupplementation is not indicated in isolated findings of chondromalacia of the patella or patellofemoral arthritis. Based on the documentation presented for review and in accordance with Official Disability Guidelines criteria, the claimant does currently not meet guidelines to proceed with viscosupplementation in the form of Synvisc injection times one to the left knee and subsequently cannot be considered medically necessary.