

Case Number:	CM14-0065371		
Date Assigned:	07/11/2014	Date of Injury:	08/26/2011
Decision Date:	09/15/2014	UR Denial Date:	04/25/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	05/08/2014

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 General Surgery, has a subspecialty in Surgical Critical Care and is licensed to practice in Texas. 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 26 year-old female who sustained an industrial injury to her back on August 26, 2011. The claimant underwent conservative care and returned to work. Subsequently in March 2012 the claimant returned to undergo further care to her low back. The claimant had a MRI of the low back on April 3, 2012. The claimant had surgical consultation on July 2, 2012, at which time the opinion was that she was not a surgical candidate. She was advised to lose weight as physical exam noted her height as 5 ft 6 inches and 230lbs. The claimant had a course of [REDACTED] weight loss program which reported a twenty-one pound weight loss which is in contradistinction to the recorded weight of 221 pounds. The request is for a continuation of the [REDACTED] program.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

[REDACTED] weight loss program: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence, J Med Internet Res. 2014 Feb 19, self-directed interventions to promote weight loss, a systematic review of reviews.

Decision rationale: The claimant is obese but has undertaken a [REDACTED] program and allegedly lost 21 lbs. There is conflicting documentation as to the true amount of weight loss, 9 lbs versus 21. Furthermore the claimant has had a full term pregnancy so it is not clear how much of the weight gain is attributable to the alleged inactivity due to the industrial injury. ACOEM and the ODG are silent on weight loss programs. Any short term weight loss is fraught with relapse and recurrence of obesity. Only long term behavior modification strategies can maintain weight loss. The claimant is not compliant with the exercise program that was requested of her. The medical literature supports long term weight loss through self-directed behavior modifications is achievable. This request remains not medically necessary.