

Case Number:	CM14-0076000		
Date Assigned:	07/16/2014	Date of Injury:	04/25/2001
Decision Date:	11/03/2014	UR Denial Date:	05/02/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	05/23/2014

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 Otolaryngology 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:

Client is an adult male who sustained multiple orthopedic injuries while riding a bicycle at work in 1997. He also sustained stated additional hearing loss over and above a baseline hearing loss. It is also states that there is a history of excess occupational noise exposure. He underwent a left sided tympanoplasty in 2006. By an audiogram done on July 26, 2012 he is noted to have a profound sensorineural hearing loss on the right and a moderate to profound mixed hearing loss on the left. Speech discrimination is noted to be poor on the right and fair on the left. . It is also noted that there was significant decline in hearing from 2008 to 2012. It appears that new hearing aids were fitted and dispensed in 2012. Request is now made for updated audiometric evaluation, hearing aid evaluation, reprogramming and batteries.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Hearing Aid Evaluation: 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): Head Chapter

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) - Evaluation and Purchase of New Devices Is Recommended Once Every 4 Years

Decision rationale: Current devices are 2 years old and there is no documentation that they are not functional. Given the above, the request for a Hearing Aid Evaluation is not medically necessary.

Reprogramming:

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG): Head Chapter

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) < It is stated that if there is dysfunction of the current hearing aids then it is reasonable to re-evaluate, re-program and/or obtain new batteries for the devices.

Decision rationale: The ODG states that if there is "dysfunction of the current hearing aids then it is reasonable to re-evaluate, re-program and/or obtain new batteries for the devices." There is no documentation that current 2 year old amplification devices are in any way dysfunctional. Therefore, the request for Reprogramming is not medically necessary.

Hearing Aid Batteries: 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): (DME) Equipment

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) It is stated that if there is dysfunction of the current hearing aids then it is reasonable to re-evaluate, re-program and/or obtain new batteries for the devices

Decision rationale: The ODG states that if there is "dysfunction of the current hearing aids then it is reasonable to re-evaluate, re-program and/or obtain new batteries for the devices." There were no documentations that the current devices are dysfunctional; therefore, the request for Hearing Aid Batteries is not medically necessary.