

Case Number:	CM14-0076740		
Date Assigned:	08/25/2014	Date of Injury:	08/09/2012
Decision Date:	10/14/2014	UR Denial Date:	05/02/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	05/27/2014

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 Family 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:

This is a 60-year-old male patient who reported an industrial injury on 8/9/2012, over two (2) years ago, to his back, attributed to the performance of his usual and customary job tasks reported as a trip and fall over a hose on the floor causing him to fall onto the right side of his body. The patient reported pain to lower back and right knee. The patient received conservative care with medications and physical therapy. The patient underwent surgical intervention to the right knee with arthroscopy on 12/13/2012. The patient reportedly underwent partial medial meniscectomy, partial synovectomy, chondroplasty and debridement. The patient continued to report postoperative right knee pain. The patient was noted to have tenderness to palpation and decreased range of motion to the lumbar spine with persistent right knee discomfort postoperatively with palpation. The diagnoses included displacement of lumbar inter-vertebral disc without myelopathy; lower back pain with bilateral lower extremity radiculopathy; degeneration of lumbar or lumbosacral inter-vertebral disc; lumbar facet joint syndrome/hypertrophy; myalgias; insomnia; grade 1 degenerative retrolisthesis of L3; grade 1 degenerative retrolisthesis of L4; bilateral neural foraminal stenosis at L1-L2, L2-L3, L3-L4, L4-L5, and L5-S1. The patient was noted to be not working. The treatment plan included an FCE.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Functional Capacity Examination: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Page(s): 137-138.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM), 2nd Edition, (2004) chapter 7 pages 132-139, 137-138 and Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) fitness for duty chapter functional capacity evaluation.

Decision rationale: The request for a FCE for the diagnosis of chronic back and knee postoperative pain was not supported with objective evidence to demonstrate medical necessity for the treatment of this industrial injury. The ODG recommends that the FCE is not ordered routinely. There are no complex issues identified, such as, prior unsuccessful attempt so return to work or conflicting reports for fitness to perform work. The objective findings on examination did not support the medical necessity of a FCE to establish work restrictions. There is no medical necessity for the requested functional capacity evaluation prior to evaluating whether or not the employer is able to accommodate the provided work restrictions. The Functional Capacity Evaluation (FCE) is not demonstrated to be medically necessary and has not been requested by the employer. The FCE is requested for chronic knee and back pain with no changes on the current documented objective findings on examination. The FCE was not demonstrated to be medically necessary for the evaluation and treatment of the patient over two years after the cited DOI. The patient can be cleared without the medical necessity of an FCE based on the results of the documented physical examination. The objective findings on examination indicate that the patient would be able to perform the documented job requirements. There is no demonstrated medical necessity for the FCE to establish a clearance. The request for authorization was made to establish a "baseline," which was adequately provided with the documented physical examination. There are no recommendations by evidence-based guidelines to perform a FCE to establish a baseline for the treatment of the patient for the cited industrial injury that is related to the back and knee diagnoses. There is no objective subjective/objective evidence provided to support the medical necessity of the requested functional capacity evaluation for the effects of the reported industrial injury or whether or not the ability to perform the patient's job description is affected. There is no indication that the FCE is required to establish the patient current status to perform modified work presently offered by the employer. There is no indication that the employer cannot accommodate the specified work restrictions due to the effects of the industrial injury to the neck and BUEs. There is no demonstrated medical necessity for the FCE for the diagnosed back and knee issues. Therefore, the request of Functional Capacity Examination is not medically necessary and appropriate.