

Case Number:	CM13-0054950		
Date Assigned:	12/30/2013	Date of Injury:	05/16/2003
Decision Date:	12/10/2015	UR Denial Date:	10/18/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/20/2013

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. 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/Service. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

The Expert Reviewer has the following credentials:
 State(s) of Licensure: New Jersey, Alabama, California
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Neurology, Neuromuscular Medicine

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 a 55 year old man who sustained a work-related injury on May 16, 2003. Subsequently he developed but upper and lower back pain. According to the progress note dated on November 18, 2013, the patient was taking Neurontin and Norco, Motrin for pain management. According to another report dated on September 11, 2013, the patient was treated with Neurontin orbiting Ambien and Zanaflex. Physical examination demonstrated chronic pain syndrome secondary to myofascial pain. The patient was previously in a functional restoration program but had to stop prematurely because of adverse reaction to medications. The provider requested authorization for pain management counseling.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Pain Management Counseling x6, once weekly for 6 weeks: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Chronic pain programs (functional restoration programs) Page(s): (s) 31-32.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Chronic pain programs, early intervention Page(s): (s) 32-33.

Decision rationale: According to MTUS guidelines, the presence of red flags may indicate the need for specialty consultation. In addition, the requesting physician should provide a documentation supporting the medical necessity for a pain management evaluation with a specialist. The documentation should include the reasons, the specific goals and end point for using the expertise of a specialist. In the chronic pain programs, early intervention section of MTUS guidelines stated: Recommendations for identification of patients that may benefit from early intervention via a multidisciplinary approach: (a) The patient's response to treatment falls outside of the established norms for their specific diagnosis without a physical explanation to explain symptom severity. (b) The patient exhibits excessive pain behavior and/or complaints compared to that expected from the diagnosis. (c) There is a previous medical history of delayed recovery. (d) The patient is not a candidate where surgery or other treatments would clearly be warranted. (e) Inadequate employer support. (f) Loss of employment for greater than 4 weeks. The most discernible indication of at risk status is lost time from work of 4 to 6 weeks. (Mayer 2003) . There is no clear documentation that the patient needs a pain management evaluation as per MTUS criteria. There is no clear documentation that the patient had delayed recovery and a response to medications that falls outside the established norm. The provider did not document the reasons, the specific goals and end point for using the expertise of a specialist. Therefore, the request for Pain Management Counseling; 6 weeks is not medically necessary.