

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0156960		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	12/03/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	03/09/2013
<b>Decision Date:</b>	01/13/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	08/26/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	09/25/2014

### 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 Occupational 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:

The applicant is a represented [REDACTED] employee who has filed a claim for chronic knee, neck, ankle, and low back pain with derivative complaints of anxiety and depression reportedly associated with an industrial injury of March 9, 2013. In a Utilization Review Report dated August 26, 2014, the claims administrator approved a request for a diagnostic lumbar sympathetic block and occupational therapy for desensitization training while denying a request to 'consider pain psychology.' It was not clear whether this request represented a consultation request or whether this request represented a request for a specific psychological treatment. The claims administrator stated that its decision was based on an August 11, 2014 RFA form. The applicant's attorney subsequently appealed. In a progress note dated August 29, 2014, the applicant reported ongoing complaints of foot, ankle, and leg pain. The applicant was using Motrin and Pamelor for pain relief. The applicant's pain complaints scored a 9/10, exacerbated by standing and walking. It was suggested in one section of the note that the applicant was working with restrictions at a rate of six hours a day. Neurontin and stellate ganglion blocks were endorsed. On June 10, 2014, it was stated that the applicant was working full duty as a clerk despite ongoing multifocal pain complaints. A short course of prednisone was endorsed on this occasion. The remainder of the file was surveyed. It did not appear that the August 11, 2014 RFA form and associated progress note were incorporated into the Independent Medical Review packet.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Consider pain psychology:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ODG Psychological evaluation

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Psychological Treatment Page(s): 101.

**Decision rationale:** While page 101 of the MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines does acknowledge that psychological treatment is recommended for appropriately identified applicants during the treatment for chronic pain purposes, in this case, however, it was not clearly stated what the request in question represented. It was not clear whether this request represented a request for one-time psychological consultation/one-time psychological evaluation or whether the request represented a request for multiple sessions of psychological counseling. Several progress notes, referenced above, furthermore, did not contain any reference or mention of the applicant's reporting psychological issues. It was not clearly stated for what purpose and/or what context the request to 'consider pain psychology' was framed as the August 11, 2014 progress note and RFA form on which the article in question were sought were seemingly not incorporated into the Independent Medical Review packet. The information which is on file, however, failed to substantiate or elaborate upon the nature of the request. Therefore, the request is not medically necessary.