

Case Number:	CM14-0196167		
Date Assigned:	12/04/2014	Date of Injury:	12/01/2009
Decision Date:	01/21/2015	UR Denial Date:	11/11/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/24/2014

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 Licensed in Psychology 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 49 year old male sustained work related industrial injuries on December 01, 2009. The mechanism of injury was not described. The injured worker's diagnoses include chronic right shoulder pain, degenerative joint disease of right shoulder, suprascapular neuritis, depression, and cervical spondylosis. Documentation noted that in November of 2012, the injured worker was diagnosed with major depressive disorder, single episode and was treated up until April 2013 when his medical coverage ended. According to the psychologist's notes dated October 30, 2014, the injured worker has suicidal and self-harm thoughts 30% of the day secondary to not being able to work as a result of his shoulder and elbow pain. Psychologist recommendation was for a minimum of twenty intensive psychotherapy sessions to develop thoughts and actions to prevent the injured worker from self-harm. The treating physician prescribed twenty follow-up visits with the psychologist, which is now under review. On November 11, 2014, Utilization Review evaluated the prescription for twenty follow up visits with psychologist. Upon review of the clinical information, UR modified the request to six follow up visits with psychologist from November 6, 2014 to February 27, 2015, noting the need to reevaluate effectiveness for additional treatment in accordance with the ODG and ACOEM guidelines. This UR decision was subsequently appealed to the Independent Medical Review.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Follow-up visits with psychologist x 20: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 15 Stress Related Conditions. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG)

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Mental Illness and Stress Chapter

Decision rationale: The CA MTUS does not address the treatment of depression therefore, the Official Disability Guideline regarding the cognitive treatment of depression will be used as reference for this case. Based on the review of the limited medical records, the injured worker participated in psychotherapy with [REDACTED] for 5 months from 2012 through 2013. He has not received any psychological services since that time. According to [REDACTED] Psychological Evaluation dated 10/30/14, the injured worker's symptoms of depression have significantly increased over the past 1.5 years, culminating in a serious suicide attempt in October 2014. Based on her assessment, [REDACTED] recommended a minimum of 20 intensive psychotherapy sessions. The ODG recommends an "initial trial of 6 visits over 6 weeks" and "with evidence of objective functional improvement, a total of up to 13-20 visits over 13-20 weeks" may be authorized. Given this information, the request for an initial 20 sessions exceeds the recommended number of initial sessions. As a result, the request for "Follow-up visits with psychologist x 20" is not medically necessary.