

Case Number:	CM14-0205607		
Date Assigned:	12/17/2014	Date of Injury:	10/22/2010
Decision Date:	02/10/2015	UR Denial Date:	11/24/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	12/09/2014

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 Physical Medicine Rehab, has a subspecialty in Interventional spine 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 patient presents with arthritis of the bilateral knee and lumbosacral sprain/strain. The current request is for [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. The utilization review denied the request stating that "there is limited report that the claimant is unable to use a simple walking device to assist the claimant during ambulation and with stairs." The ACOEM, MTUS and ODG Guidelines do not discuss chair lifts. AETNA guidelines, support chair or patient lifts if the patient is incapable of standing from a seated position, has severe arthritis of the hip or knee, once standing must have ability to ambulate and seat lift must be prescribed to effect improvement, or arrest or retard deterioration in patient's condition. AETNA recommends lift chairs for patients that meet all criteria as stated above. In this case, the treating physician states that the patient has arthritis of the bilateral knees, but there are no discussions or x-rays that document "severe arthritis of the hip or knee," as require by AETNA. In addition, there is no physical examination provided and no discussion if the patient is able stand from a sitting position or able to ambulate once in a standing position. The requested stair lift system IS NOT medically necessary.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

[REDACTED] : Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines - TWC, Knee & Leg Procedure Summary (updated 10/27/14)

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence: Aetna Clinical Policy Bulletin: Seat Lifts and Patient Lifts. Number: 0459.

Decision rationale: This patient presents with arthritis of the bilateral knee and lumbosacral sprain/strain. The current request is for a [REDACTED]. The utilization review denied the request stating that "there is limited report that the claimant is unable to use a simple walking device to assist the claimant during ambulation and with stairs." The ACOEM, MTUS and ODG Guidelines do not discuss chair lifts. AETNA guidelines, support chair or patient lifts if the patient is incapable of standing from a seated position, has severe arthritis of the hip or knee, once standing must have ability to ambulate and seat lift must be prescribed to effect improvement, or arrest or retard deterioration in patient's condition. AETNA recommends lift chairs for patients that meet all criteria as stated above. In this case, the treating physician states that the patient has arthritis of the bilateral knees, but there are no discussions or x-rays that document "severe arthritis of the hip or knee," as require by AETNA. In addition, there is no physical examination provided and no discussion if the patient is able stand from a sitting position or able to ambulate once in a standing position. The requested stair lift system IS NOT medically necessary.