

Case Number:	CM14-0205616		
Date Assigned:	12/17/2014	Date of Injury:	01/04/2008
Decision Date:	02/12/2015	UR Denial Date:	11/21/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	12/08/2014

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 Orthopedic Surgery 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:

68 year old claimant with reported industrial injury of 1/4/08. Supplemental report from 1/6/14 demonstrates claimant sustained a knee injury in 2008. Prior history of knee injury in 1998 is mentioned but not described. Left knee imaging is reported to have bone on bone degenerative disease. Exam note from 10/15/14 demonstrates report of bilateral knee pain. Knee motion is noted to be 5-90 degrees. 2-3+ patellofemoral crepitus is noted. Medial and lateral joint line tenderness is noted. Recommendation is made for total joint arthroplasty.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Left total knee replacement: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 13 Knee Complaints. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Knee and Leg regarding Knee Joint Replacement

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Knee and Leg, Arthroplasty.

Decision rationale: CA MTUS/ACOEM is silent on the issue of total knee replacement. According to the Official Disability Guidelines regarding Knee arthroplasty:

Criteria for knee joint replacement which includes conservative care with subjective findings including limited range of motion less than 90 degrees. In addition the patient should have a BMI of less than 35 and be older than 50 years of age. There must also be findings on standing radiographs of significant loss of chondral clear space. The clinical information submitted demonstrates insufficient evidence to support a knee arthroplasty in this patient. There is no documentation from the exam notes from 10/15/14 of increased pain with initiation of activity or weight bearing. There are no records in the chart documenting when physical therapy began or how many visits were attempted. There is no formal weight bearing radiographic report of degree of osteoarthritis. Therefore the guideline criteria have not been met and the determination is for non-certification.

Associated Surgical Service medical clearance for surgery: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

Decision rationale: Since the primary procedure is not medically necessary, none of the associated services are medically necessary.

Associated surgical service post-op physical therapy: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

Decision rationale: Since the primary procedure is not medically necessary, none of the associated services are medically necessary.