

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0102872		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	06/05/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	01/10/2012
<b>Decision Date:</b>	07/07/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	04/20/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	05/28/2015

### 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: California  
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Psychologist

### 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 47-year-old male, who sustained an industrial injury on 1/10/2012. He reported injury from chemical exposure. The injured worker was diagnosed as having major depressive episode, generalized anxiety disorder and panic disorder without agoraphobia. There is no record of a recent diagnostic study. Treatment to date has included cognitive behavior therapy, hypnotherapy and medication management. In a progress note dated 4/16/2015, the injured worker complains of difficulty concentrating, fears dying, heart palpitations and feels sad and discouraged and has decreased bouts of nervousness. Physical examination showed the injured worker was sad, anxious, preoccupied with physical symptoms, poor concentration and memory, apprehensive and in need of further mental health treatment. The treating physician is requesting 6 visits of group medical psychotherapy, 6 visits for medical hypnotherapy and 6 office visits.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Group medical psychotherapy 1 time weekly for 6 weeks:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Page(s): 1063, 1064.

**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 Cognitive therapy for depression.

**Decision rationale:** Based on the review of the medical records, the injured worker completed an initial psychological evaluation with [REDACTED] in April 2014. In his comprehensive report, [REDACTED] recommended follow-up psychological services for which the injured worker received. The injured worker has received individual and group psychotherapy as well as hypnotherapy/relaxation training sessions for an unknown number of sessions. For the treatment of depression, the ODG recommends up to 13-20 visits, if progress is being made. This recommendation is for individual therapy however, it can be generalized to include group therapy as well. However, in the most recent progress report dated 4/6/15, there is no mention as to the number of completed sessions to date, nor any exact improvements that have been achieved as a result of the completed services. The progress noted simply states, "Patient has made progress towards current treatment goals as evidenced by patient reports of improved mood and ability to relax with treatment." Without sufficient information to substantiate the need for additional treatment, the request for an additional 6 group psychotherapy sessions is not medically necessary.

**Medical hypnotherapy/relaxation 1 time weekly for 6 weeks:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Page(s): 1063, 1064.

**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 Hypnotherapy.

**Decision rationale:** Based on the review of the medical records, the injured worker completed an initial psychological evaluation with [REDACTED] in April 2014. In his comprehensive report, [REDACTED] recommended follow-up psychological services for which the injured worker received. The injured worker has received individual and group psychotherapy as well as hypnotherapy/relaxation training sessions for an unknown number of sessions. In the use of hypnotherapy, the ODG recommends that the number of visits be contained within the total number of psychotherapy visits. Therefore, it is important to understand the need for additional psychotherapy visits. In the most recent progress report dated 4/6/15, there is no mention as to the number of completed sessions to date, nor any exact improvements that have been achieved as a result of the completed services. The progress noted simply states, "Patient has made progress towards current treatment goals as evidenced by patient reports of improved mood and ability to relax with treatment." Without sufficient information to substantiate the need for any additional treatment, the request for an additional 6 hypnotherapy sessions is not medically necessary.

**Office visits 1 time 6 weeks:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Page(s): 1063, 1064.

**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 Office Visits.

**Decision rationale:** Based on the review of the medical records, the injured worker completed an initial psychological evaluation with [REDACTED] in April 2014. In his comprehensive report, [REDACTED] recommended follow-up psychological services for which the injured worker received. The injured worker has received individual and group psychotherapy as well as hypnotherapy/relaxation training sessions for an unknown number of sessions. The request under review is for follow-up office visits that are to be used in conjunction with additional psychotherapy and hypnotherapy sessions. In the most recent progress report dated 4/6/15, there is no mention as to the number of completed sessions to date, nor any exact improvements that have been achieved as a result of the completed services. The progress noted simply states, "Patient has made progress towards current treatment goals as evidenced by patient reports of improved mood and ability to relax with treatment." Without sufficient information to substantiate the need for any additional treatment, the need for office visits is unnecessary. As a result, the request for 6 office visits is not medically necessary.