

Case Number:	CM15-0103750		
Date Assigned:	06/08/2015	Date of Injury:	06/04/2013
Decision Date:	08/27/2015	UR Denial Date:	05/19/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	05/29/2015

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: Emergency Medicine

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 40 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 6-04-2013. The injured worker was diagnosed as having right lateral epicondylitis, cervical strain, lumbar strain, and cervical radiculopathy. Treatment to date has included diagnostics, physical rehab, electro-acupuncture, home exercise, and medications. On 4/30/2015, the injured worker complained of ongoing pain in her right upper extremity that radiated down the right side of her neck, and low back pain. Her gait was normal without the use of an assistive device. Exam of the cervical spine noted right sided cervical paraspinous tightness over the trapezius and rhomboids. Range of motion was painful and she had tenderness to palpation over the right shoulder and, as well as in her right elbow and hand. Medications included Tramadol and Gabapentin. She was awaiting a second opinion with a spinal surgeon. The treatment plan included a functional restoration program. The rationale was that she already tried all the conservative treatment and had delayed recovery. She was motivated and wanted to participate in the program. Her work status was partial temporary disability.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

FRP: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Functional restoration programs (FRPs) Page(s): 31-32, 49.

Decision rationale: The requested FRP, is not medically necessary. CA MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, Pg. 49, Functional restoration programs (FRPs), note that functional restoration programs are "Recommended, although research is still ongoing as to how to most appropriately screen for inclusion in these programs," and note "These programs emphasize the importance of function over the elimination of pain," and that treatment in excess of 20 full-day sessions "requires a clear rationale for the specified extension and reasonable goals to be achieved". The injured worker has ongoing pain in her right upper extremity that radiated down the right side of her neck, and low back pain. Her gait was normal without the use of an assistive device. Exam of the cervical spine noted right sided cervical paraspinous tightness over the trapezius and rhomboids. Range of motion was painful and she had tenderness to palpation over the right shoulder and, as well as in her right elbow and hand. Medications included Tramadol and Gabapentin. She was awaiting a second opinion with a spinal surgeon. CA MTUS 2009 Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines recommend a functional restoration program with satisfaction of specifically identified qualification criteria, all of which must be satisfied for approval of such a program and "Recommended where there is access to programs with proven successful outcomes, for patients with conditions that put them at risk of delayed recovery". Satisfaction of all of these criteria is not currently documented (including non-surgical candidacy, significant functional loss, positive motivation, and addressed negative predictors of success). The criteria noted above not having been met, FRP is not medically necessary.