

Case Number:	CM15-0104114		
Date Assigned:	06/08/2015	Date of Injury:	11/21/2014
Decision Date:	07/09/2015	UR Denial Date:	04/27/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	05/31/2015

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: Texas, New York, California

Certification(s)/Specialty: Preventive Medicine, Occupational 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 applicant is a represented 59-year-old who has filed a claim for chronic knee pain reportedly associated with an industrial injury of November 21, 2014. In a Utilization Review report dated April 27, 2015, the claims administrator failed to approve a request for nine sessions of physical therapy to the knee. The claims administrator contended that the applicant has had earlier "unspecified" physical therapy treatments. The applicant and/or applicant's attorney personally appealed. In a response dated May 31, 2015, the applicant contended that she had not received any physical therapy treatment to date. The applicant stated multiple requests for physical therapy had been denied by the claims administrator. The applicant contended that she had never received any prior physical therapy, either in the acute or chronic pain phase of treatment. In a RFA form dated June 27, 2015, nine sessions of physical therapy were sought. In a letter dated June 16, 2015, the applicant's treating provider stated that he might have to pursue a surgical remedy for meniscal tear if physical therapy was not approved and/or was unsuccessful. On May 20, 2015, the applicant's knee surgeon sought authorization for 12 sessions of physical therapy. On March 10, 2015, the applicant reported persistent complaints of knee pain, worsening, without overt instability or weakness. The applicant was apparently given a knee corticosteroid injection at this time. The applicant apparently had knee MRI imaging that demonstrated tricompartmental arthritic changes and/or meniscal tearing. Physical therapy and a 20-pound lifting limitation were endorsed. It was acknowledged that the applicant was off of work as her employer was apparently unable to accommodate said limitations. The remainder of the file was

surveyed. There were not physical therapy progress notes seemingly incorporated into the IMR packet.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Physical Therapy 9 Sessions to The Left Knee 1x9: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Physical Medicine Page(s): 98-99.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Physical Medicine Page(s): 99.

Decision rationale: Yes, the request for nine sessions of physical therapy was medically necessary, medically appropriate, and indicated here. The nine-session course of treatment at issue is consistent with the 9- to 10-session course recommended on page 99 of the MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines for myalgias and myositis of various body parts, the diagnosis reportedly present here. The request, furthermore, was framed as a first-time request for physical therapy. The attending provider and/or applicant both contended that the applicant had never received any previous physical therapy. There were no physical therapy progress notes on file to rebut the applicant's assertion that she had yet to receive any physical therapy treatment(s) to date. The attending provider stated that he was optimistic that the physical therapy at issue could potentially obviate the need for knee surgery. Moving forward with the request in question was, thus, indicated. Therefore, the request was medically necessary.