

Case Number:	CM15-0134831		
Date Assigned:	07/23/2015	Date of Injury:	09/27/2012
Decision Date:	08/27/2015	UR Denial Date:	07/07/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	07/13/2015

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: Orthopedic Surgery, Hand Surgery, Sports 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 44 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on 9/27/12. The injured worker has complaints of left and right wrist and hand pain and cervical pain with upper extremity symptoms. The documentation noted spasm of the forearm musculature less pronounced. There is cervical spine tenderness and range of motion is limited and spasms noted at the cervical trapezius. There is diminished median nerve distribution, right and left. The diagnoses have included bilateral median neuropathy and cervical myofascial pain. Treatment to date has included acupuncture; therapeutic exercise and medications. The request was for post-operative physical therapy 3 times a week for 4 weeks after carpal tunnel release surgery.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Post operative physical therapy 3 times a week for 4 weeks: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Postsurgical Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 16, 22.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Postsurgical Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 16.

Decision rationale: The California MTUS notes that, "there is limited evidence demonstrating effectiveness" of therapy for carpal tunnel syndrome and, "carpal tunnel release surgery is a relatively simple operation" that should not require extensive therapy visits for recovery (page 15). The guidelines support 3-8 therapy sessions over 3-5 weeks after carpal tunnel release surgery (page 16). An initial course of therapy is defined as one-half the maximal number of visits (page 10) 4 sessions following carpal tunnel surgery. Additional therapy sessions up to the maximum allowed is appropriate only if there is documented functional improvement defined as clinically significant improvement in activities of daily living or a reduction in work restrictions and a reduction in the dependency on continued medical treatment (page 1). The requested 12 sessions exceeds guidelines. Therefore the request is not medically necessary.