

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0147028		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	08/07/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	06/19/2011
<b>Decision Date:</b>	09/08/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	06/25/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	07/28/2015

### 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: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, Pain Management

### 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 an 81 year old female with an industrial injury dated 06-19-2011. The injured worker's diagnoses include recurrent disc herniation with spondylolisthesis at L3-4 and dextroscoliosis. Treatment consisted of diagnostic studies, prescribed medications, and periodic follow up visits. In a progress note dated 06-01-2015, the injured worker presented for review of radiographic imaging. X-ray of the lumbar spine revealed advanced dextroscoliosis with anterolisthesis of L3-L4 with marked degenerative disc disease at every segment of the lumbar spine. Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scan revealed large L3-4 disc herniation, larger than previous scan, with the development of the anterolisthesis. The treating physician reported the injured worker's persistent left hip pain which tends to increase with walking and decrease while lying down. The treating physician also reported that surgical corrective treatment for her scoliosis would most likely not be tolerated due to her age. The treatment plan involved pain medication and physical therapy to decrease pain, improve spinal mobility and ranges of motion. The treating physician prescribed services for 12 physical therapy visits for the lumbar spine, now under review.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**12 physical therapy visits for the lumbar spine:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Internet, Preface.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines 8 C.C.R. MTUS (Effective July 18, 2009) Page(s): 98-99 of 127. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ODG, Low Back Chapter, Physical Medicine.

**Decision rationale:** Regarding the request for physical therapy, Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines recommend a short course (10 sessions) of active therapy with continuation of active therapies at home as an extension of the treatment process in order to maintain improvement levels. ODG has more specific criteria for the ongoing use of physical therapy. ODG recommends a trial of physical therapy. If the trial of physical therapy results in objective functional improvement, as well as ongoing objective treatment goals, then additional therapy may be considered. Within the documentation available for review, there is no documentation of specific objective functional improvement with any previous sessions and remaining deficits that cannot be addressed within the context of an independent home exercise program yet are expected to improve with formal supervised therapy. Furthermore, the request exceeds the amount of PT recommended by the CA MTUS and, unfortunately, there is no provision for modification of the current request. In light of the above issues, the currently requested physical therapy is not medically necessary.