

Case Number:	CM15-0160997		
Date Assigned:	08/27/2015	Date of Injury:	11/13/2013
Decision Date:	10/02/2015	UR Denial Date:	07/27/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	08/17/2015

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 62 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 11-13-2013. She reported pain in the hand from repetitive use. Diagnoses include left long and ring finger triggering, status post trigger release surgery. Treatments to date were not documented in the medical records submitted for this review. Currently, she complained of right hand pain and numbness to right long finger after trigger release surgery. On 4-29-15, the physical examination documented numbness to the right long finger radial side. The plan of care included a request to authorize suture of neuroplasty of right long finger digital nerve.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Suture of neuroplasty of right long finger digital nerve: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation J Bone Joint Surg Am. 2013 Dec 4;95(23):2144-51. doi: 10.2106/JBJS.L.00704. Peripheral nerve repair and reconstruction.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Green's Operative Hand Surgery, 6th ed. Chapter 32, Nerve Repair.

Decision rationale: This is a request for digital nerve exploration and possible surgical repair. The surgery is beyond the scope of the California MTUS, but discussed in the specialty text referenced. Limited records provided are inconsistent with a March 4, 2015 report noting right long and ring finger pain, numbness and tingling attributed to years of repetitive motion and noting, "patient would like to delay treatment until she receives treatment for her neck" but an April 29, 2015 report suggesting just radial sided long finger numbness presumed secondary to injury to the nerve at the time of right long and ring finger trigger release surgery on October 7, 2014. Repetitive hand use does not cause digital nerve injury. Digital nerve injury can occur during trigger finger release surgery, but injury to multiple nerves as would be necessary to result in numbness in multiple digits would be extremely unlikely. Cervical radiculopathy can result in finger numbness and tingling. There is no documentation of electrodiagnostic evidence of digital nerve dysfunction. In the absence of objective electrodiagnostic evidence of digital nerve injury, digital nerve exploration and attempted repair are unlikely to be beneficial. Therefore, the request is not medically necessary.