

Case Number:	CM15-0167903		
Date Assigned:	09/08/2015	Date of Injury:	10/16/2012
Decision Date:	10/07/2015	UR Denial Date:	07/27/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	08/26/2015

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

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 48 year old female who sustained an industrial moving vehicle accident injury on 10-16-2012. The injured worker was diagnosed with complete rotator cuff tear, rotator cuff sprain, strain, and surgical intervention with post-operative arthrofibrosis adhesive capsulitis. The injured worker is status post a left shoulder subacromial decompression, Mumford procedure and rotator cuff repair on June 25, 2014. Past treatments that were documented consist of diagnostic testing, surgery, post-op sling, physical therapy (6 post-op visits completed), steroid injection, home exercise program and medication. The requested treatment for IMR was initially reviewed by the Utilization Review on 07-27-2015. According to the treating physician's report dated July 10, 2015, the injured worker continues to experience shoulder pain, stiffness and weakness. The recent steroid injection on May 22, 2015 helped relieve her symptoms but range of motion continues to be painful particularly with abduction. The injured worker reported sleeping has improved but can flare-up depending on activity levels. Examination demonstrated 80% active and 90% passive range of motion with a painful arc of motion and painful endpoint, abduction greater than forward flexion. An internal rotation contracture of approximately 10 degrees and a positive impingement sign was documented. Rotator cuff examination is 5 out of 5 except for the supraspinatus which is at 4 out of 5 with pain on isolation and loading. Current medication was noted as Naprosyn. The injured worker had restricted work, not accommodated and remains off work. The treatment plan consists of continuing with conservative measures, home exercise program, Naprosyn and the current request for physical therapy twice a week for 6 weeks for the left shoulder.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Physical Therapy 2xWk x 6Wks of the Left Shoulder, Qty: 12: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Postsurgical Treatment Guidelines.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Physical Therapy, pages 98-99.

Decision rationale: Physical therapy is considered medically necessary when the services require the judgment, knowledge, and skills of a qualified physical therapist due to the complexity and sophistication of the therapy and the physical condition of the patient. However, there is no clear measurable evidence of progress with the PT treatment already rendered including milestones of increased ROM, strength, and functional capacity. Review of submitted physician reports show no evidence of functional benefit, unchanged chronic symptom complaints, clinical findings, and functional status. There is no evidence documenting functional baseline with clear goals to be reached and the patient striving to reach those goals. The Chronic Pain Guidelines allow for visits of physical therapy with fading of treatment to an independent self-directed home program. It appears the employee has received significant therapy sessions without demonstrated evidence of functional improvement to allow for additional therapy treatments. There is no report of acute flare-up, new injuries, or change in symptom or clinical findings to support for formal PT in a patient that has been instructed on a home exercise program for this chronic injury. Submitted reports have not adequately demonstrated the indication to support further physical therapy when prior treatment rendered has not resulted in any functional benefit. The Physical Therapy 2xWk x 6Wks of the Left Shoulder, QTY: 12 is not medically necessary or appropriate.