

Case Number:	CM15-0196056		
Date Assigned:	10/09/2015	Date of Injury:	04/29/1991
Decision Date:	11/18/2015	UR Denial Date:	08/31/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/05/2015

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, Minnesota
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Chiropractor

CLINICAL CASE SUMMARY

The expert reviewer developed the following clinical case summary based on a review of the case file, including all medical records:

This is a 76 year old male who sustained a work-related injury on 4-29-91. Medical record documentation on 8-2-15 revealed the injured worker was being treated for displacement of the lumbar disc w/o myelopathy, sciatic and post-laminectomy syndrome of the cervical spine. Subjective complaints and objective findings were not documented on the 8-2-15 progress note. The chiropractic provider noted in the 8-2-15 documentation that two visits of chiropractic therapy were not sufficient to clear up the injured worker's flare up and that the injured worker traditionally required four visits to overcome the exacerbation. In an undated handwritten letter the chiropractic provider noted that his activities of daily living had decreased by 40-50 percent and he could not sleep at night. He had a difficult time transitioning from sit to stand to walk. He rated his pain a 5-8 on a 10-point scale. He was still trying to work and he noted that his work was difficult and he would pass on accepting optional shifts. One to two chiropractic therapy visits helped slightly but three to four visits were required to resolve his symptoms and return him to normal function. Documentation revealed the injured worker had completed twenty visits of chiropractic therapy from 1-23-09 to 5-29-15. The chiropractic provider noted on an undated document that he was unable to assess functional improvement from the chiropractic therapy "due to the fact that we have only seen him once in the past four years." A request for four sessions of chiropractic manipulation was received on 8-24-15. On 8-31-15, the Utilization Review physician determined four sessions of chiropractic manipulation was not medically necessary.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

4 sessions of chiropractic manipulation: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Manual therapy & manipulation.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Manual therapy & manipulation.

Decision rationale: According to the MTUS Chronic Pain Guidelines above, manipulation of the low back (and cervical/thoracic spine) is recommended as an option of 6 trial visits over 2 weeks, with evidence of objective functional improvement, total of up to 18 visits over 6-8 weeks. The doctor has requested 4 chiropractic sessions of chiropractic manipulation over an unspecified period of time apparently to the cervical and/or lumbar spine. The request for treatment (4 visits) is within the above guidelines (6 visits) and therefore the treatment is medically necessary and appropriate. In order for the patient to receive more treatment, the doctor must document objective functional improvement from these 4 approved treatments.