

Case Number:	CM15-0204849		
Date Assigned:	10/21/2015	Date of Injury:	09/12/2012
Decision Date:	12/03/2015	UR Denial Date:	10/13/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/19/2015

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 35-year-old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 9-12-2012. The injured worker was being treated for right wrist pain and status post carpometacarpal arthroplasty. The injured worker (6-209-2015, 8-24-2015) reported ongoing right wrist pain. The physical exam (8-24-2015) reveals tenderness of the right wrist. The treating physician noted that the wrist exam was essentially unchanged. Surgeries to date have included right thumb reconstruction in 2011 and right hand reconstruction in 2014. Treatment has included physical therapy, and medications including pain, proton pump inhibitor, and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory. The requested treatments included an additional 8 sessions of physical therapy for the right wrist and hand. On 10-13-2015, the original utilization review non-certified a request for an additional 8 sessions of physical therapy for the right wrist and hand.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Additional physical therapy 2x4 for the right wrist or hand: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Physical Medicine.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Physical Medicine.

Decision rationale: Review indicates the patient has received at least 24 PT visits without demonstrated functional improvement. Time-limited care plan with specific defined goals, assessment of functional benefit with modification of ongoing treatment based upon the patient's progress in meeting those goals and the provider has continued monitoring of successful outcome is stressed by MTUS guidelines. 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. Submitted reports have no acute flare-up or specific physical limitations to support for physical therapy. The Chronic Pain Guidelines allow for visits of therapy with fading of treatment to an independent self-directed home program. The submitted reports have not identified clear specific functional improvement in ADLs, functional status, or decrease in medication and medical utilization from the formal physical therapy already rendered to support further treatment. There has not been a change in neurological compromise or red-flag findings demonstrated for PT at this time. Submitted reports have also not adequately identified the indication to support for excessive quantity of PT sessions without extenuating circumstances established beyond the guidelines. The Additional physical therapy 2x4 for the right wrist or hand is not medically necessary and appropriate.