

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0020522		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	02/10/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	03/08/2012
<b>Decision Date:</b>	03/26/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	01/06/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	02/03/2015

### 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: New Jersey  
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Family Practice

### 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 51 year old female with an industrial injury dated March 8, 2012. The injured worker diagnoses include right upper extremity complex regional pain syndrome, depressive disorder, sleep disorder, bilateral knee internal derangement with chondromalacia secondary to altered gait and rapid dental decay. She has been treated with diagnostic studies, radiographic imaging, prescribed medications, consultation and periodic follow up visits. According to the progress note dated 12/11/14, the treating provider noted that she continues to do poorly. The injured worker complained of pain spreading throughout the body and increasing weight due to decreased activity. Objective findings revealed an obese female in obvious discomfort. Her right arm remained braced across her chest and there was diffuse allodynia noted in her right arm and entire mid spine. The treating physician prescribed services for [REDACTED] weight loss program now under review. Utilization Review determination on January 6, 2015 denied the request for [REDACTED] weight loss program.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**[REDACTED] weight loss program:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Diabetes section, Lifestyle modifications

**Decision rationale:** The MTUS is silent regarding weight loss programs. The ODG, however, at least states that generally for weight loss, lifestyle changes is recommended as first-line interventions. Lifestyle (dietary and exercise) modifications are essential for all patients with metabolic disease or obesity. Reduction of obesity and an active lifestyle can have major benefits on overall health, regardless of having metabolic disease or obesity, however. The best long-term approach is to avoid restriction of any major nutrient--either fat or carbohydrate--and instead focus on the quality of nutrients (whole food, unprocessed, plant-based). The argument that the food industry makes, that all foods can be part of a healthful diet as long as you watch calories, is misleading. In the case of this worker, there was a suggestion that the worker had become less active and had gained weight due to her pain, and the weight had influenced her pain to worsen. The request was for a "[REDACTED] weight loss program" which emphasizes low-carb, low-fat, moderate-protein foods with food products to help supplement the program. This is not an ideal set up for weight loss as it may increase harm by increasing protein and reducing healthy forms of fat and complex carbohydrates. Due to the [REDACTED] program, in the opinion of the reviewer, not being a healthy, balanced way to lose weight, it will be considered medically unnecessary.