

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0024545		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	02/17/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	07/03/2008
<b>Decision Date:</b>	04/16/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	01/30/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	02/09/2015

### 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: Indiana

Certification(s)/Specialty: Preventive Medicine, Occupational 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 53 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 7/3/2008. She reported tripping over a mat and injuring her back. The injured worker was diagnosed as having a lumbar fusion, lumbar spondylosis and right-sided lumbar herniated nucleus pulposus. Treatment to date has included physical therapy, chiropractic care, lumbar epidural steroid injection, lumbosacral nerve root block, intrathecal pump insertion and medication management. Currently, a progress note from the treating provider dated 1/15/2015 indicates the injured worker reported low back pain with pain and numbness in the right leg and foot.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Electric Wheelchair (purchase): Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ODG, Knee & Leg, Wheelchair, Power Mobility Devices (PMDs).

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Power Motility Devices Page(s): 99. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Knee; Powered Mobility Devices.

**Decision rationale:** The chronic pain guidelines state the following regarding motorized wheel chairs: "Not recommended if the functional mobility deficit can be sufficiently resolved by the prescription of a cane or walker, or the patient has sufficient upper extremity function to propel a manual wheelchair, or there is a caregiver who is available, willing, and able to provide assistance with a manual wheelchair. Early exercise, mobilization and independence should be encouraged at all steps of the injury recovery process, and if there is any mobility with canes or other assistive devices, a motorized scooter is not essential to care." Additionally, ODG comments on motorized wheelchairs and says the following: "Not recommended if the functional mobility deficit can be sufficiently resolved by the prescription of a cane or walker, or the patient has sufficient upper extremity function to propel a manual wheelchair, or there is a caregiver who is available, willing, and able to provide assistance with a manual wheelchair. (CMS, 2006) Early exercise, mobilization and independence should be encouraged at all steps of the injury recovery process, and if there is any mobility with canes or other assistive devices, a motorized scooter is not essential to care." From the medical notes, it is clear that she is able to hold onto objects and get around her house. There is no medical documentation that the patient does not have sufficient upper extremity strength to propel a manual wheelchair or that there is no caregiver available. Therefore, the request for a electric wheelchair is not medically necessary.