

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0049273		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	03/23/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	02/19/2010
<b>Decision Date:</b>	05/01/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	03/02/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	03/16/2015

### 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, Michigan, California  
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Neurology, Neuromuscular 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:

This 53 year old male sustained an industrial injury to the back and right shoulder on 2/19/10. Previous treatment included magnetic resonance imaging, physical therapy, psychiatric care and medications. In a qualified medical evaluation dated 12/5/14, the injured worker complained of ongoing pain to the right shoulder with limited range of motion. The injured worker reported a past medical history including autoimmune disease with subsequent kidney damage. The injured worker stated that he had been unable to undergo surgical repair to his right shoulder due to poor kidney function. The physician noted that surgery could be done despite poor kidney function. Current diagnoses included right shoulder adhesive capsulitis, right shoulder bicep tear, depression, chronic kidney disease and ANCA vasculitis. The treatment plan included no work restrictions, orthopedic surgeon evaluation, nephrology consultation and ongoing psychiatric care.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Physical therapy evaluation for the right shoulder, per 2/19/15 order quantity: 1.00:**  
 Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines functional restoration Page(s): 7.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Chronic pain programs, early intervention Page(s): 32-33.

**Decision rationale:** According to MTUS guidelines, the presence of red flags may indicate the need for specialty consultation. In addition, the requesting physician should provide a documentation supporting the medical necessity for a pain management evaluation with a specialist. The documentation should include the reasons, the specific goals and end point for using the expertise of a specialist. In this case, there is no clear documentation for the rationale for the request of a Physical therapy evaluation for the right shoulder. The patient has had extensive physical therapy for his shoulder without any documentation of functional improvement. The requesting physician did not provide a documentation including the reasons, the specific goals and end point for using the expertise of a specialist. Therefore, the request for a Physical therapy evaluation for the right shoulder is not medically necessary.

**Physical therapy for the right shoulder (2 times a week for 6 weeks) per 2/19/15 order quantity: 12.00: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines physical medicine Page(s): 98-99.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Physical Medicine Page(s): 98.

**Decision rationale:** According to MTUS guidelines, Physical Medicine is “Recommended as indicated below. Passive therapy (those treatment modalities that do not require energy expenditure on the part of the patient) can provide short term relief during the early phases of pain treatment and are directed at controlling symptoms such as pain, inflammation and swelling and to improve the rate of healing soft tissue injuries. They can be used sparingly with active therapies to help control swelling, pain and inflammation during the rehabilitation process. Active therapy is based on the philosophy that therapeutic exercise and/or activity are beneficial for restoring flexibility, strength, endurance, function, range of motion, and can alleviate discomfort. Active therapy requires an internal effort by the individual to complete a specific exercise or task. This form of therapy may require supervision from a therapist or medical provider such as verbal, visual and/or tactile instruction(s). Patients are instructed and expected to continue active therapies at home as an extension of the treatment process in order to maintain improvement levels. Home exercise can include exercise with or without mechanical assistance or resistance and functional activities with assistive devices. (Colorado, 2002) (Airaksinen, 2006) Patient-specific hand therapy is very important in reducing swelling, decreasing pain, and improving range of motion in CRPS. (Li, 2005) The use of active treatment modalities (e.g., exercise, education, activity modification) instead of passive treatments is associated with substantially better clinical outcomes. In a large case series of patients with low back pain treated by physical therapists, those adhering to guidelines for active rather than passive treatments incurred fewer treatment visits, cost less, and had less pain and less disability. The overall

success rates were 64.7% among those adhering to the active treatment recommendations versus 36.5% for passive treatment. (Fritz, 2007).” There is no documentation of the efficacy and outcome of previous physical therapy sessions. There is no documentation that the patient cannot perform home exercise. Therefore, the request for 12 sessions of physical therapy for the right shoulder is not medically necessary.