

Case Number:	CM15-0049568		
Date Assigned:	03/23/2015	Date of Injury:	09/01/2013
Decision Date:	07/14/2015	UR Denial Date:	03/11/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	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: California, Indiana, Oregon
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Orthopedic Surgery

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 47 year old female sustained an industrial injury to the left knee on 9/1/13. The injured worker was diagnosed with a patella fracture. The injured worker was scheduled to undergo left knee hardware removal and patellofemoral joint arthroplasty on 2/10/15. No operative report was submitted for review. In a PR-2 dated 12/4/14, the injured worker reported that her knee pain continuing despite ice, heat, home exercise, medications and extensive physical therapy. Physical exam was remarkable for mild synovitis, decreased range of motion with pain and crepitus and positive patellar tilt test. Current diagnoses included posttraumatic arthritis of the patella joint. In a preoperative appointment dated 2/2/15, the physician noted that the injured worker lived on her own and due to postoperative pain, limited mobility, poor balance and fatigue the injured worker would be unable to ambulate 100 feet safely by herself. The immediate postoperative plan included transitioning to home health physical therapy versus skilled nursing facility based on her postoperative recovery in the hospital.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Skilled Nursing Facility x 2 weeks for Left Patella Traumatic Arthritis Painful Hardware:
 Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines - TWC Knee and Leg Procedure Summary, Online Version, Skilled Nursing Facility LOS.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) knee.

Decision rationale: CA MTUS/ACOEM is silent on the issue of acute rehab or skilled nursing length of stay. According to the ODG, Knee and Leg, Skilled nursing facility LOS (SNF), "Recommend up to 10-18 days in a skilled nursing facility (SNF) or 6-12 days in an inpatient rehabilitation facility (IRF), as an option but not a requirement, depending on the degree of functional limitation, ongoing skilled nursing and / or rehabilitation care needs, patient ability to participate with rehabilitation, documentation of continued progress with rehabilitation goals, and availability of proven facilities, immediately following 3-4 days acute hospital stay for arthroplasty." The decision for acute rehab or skilled nursing facility will be dependent on the outcome following the knee replacement and objective criteria during the acute inpatient admission. Although anticipated mobility detriments are documented, the decision should be made following inpatient evaluation. As there is no evidence of the results of the rehab process during the inpatient admission, the determination is for not medically necessary.