

Case Number:	CM15-0049619		
Date Assigned:	03/23/2015	Date of Injury:	03/05/2007
Decision Date:	05/01/2015	UR Denial Date:	03/09/2015
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: 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 37 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 03/05/2007 reported left wrist/hand pain; her diagnosis was reflex sympathetic dystrophy syndrome. On provider visit dated 01/28/2015 the injured worker was being treated for complex regional pain syndrome affecting all four extremities. On assessment she was noted to have severe pain in her upper extremities, unable to perform activities of daily living. Her pain was noted to be neuropathic in nature with a burning bone crushing sensation with severe allodynia. She was noted to have an intrathecal pump that was placed in her right lower quadrant of her abdomen which was noted to innervate her lower extremities. Treatment to date has included medication, diagnostic imaging and refills of intrathecal pump. The provider requested on another visit, outpatient two-week rehabilitation program which includes ten sessions of psychological consultation with a clinical pain psychologist, ten sessions of neurobiofeedback and unlimited visits with a doctor.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Outpatient two-week rehabilitation program which includes ten sessions of psychological consultation with a clinical pain psychologist, ten sessions of neurobiofeedback and unlimited visits with a doctor: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Behavioral Interventions Section.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines chronic pain programs Page(s): 30-34. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain, Chronic Pain Programs.

Decision rationale: MTUS states, "Criteria for the general use of multidisciplinary pain management programs: Outpatient pain rehabilitation programs may be considered medically necessary when all of the following criteria are met: (1) An adequate and thorough evaluation has been made, including baseline functional testing so follow-up with the same test can note functional improvement; (2) Previous methods of treating chronic pain have been unsuccessful and there is an absence of other options likely to result in significant clinical improvement; (3) The patient has a significant loss of ability to function independently resulting from the chronic pain; (4) The patient is not a candidate where surgery or other treatments would clearly be warranted (if a goal of treatment is to prevent or avoid controversial or optional surgery, a trial of 10 visits may be implemented to assess whether surgery may be avoided); (5) The patient exhibits motivation to change, and is willing to forgo secondary gains, including disability payments to effect this change; & (6) Negative predictors of success above have been addressed." ODG states concerning chronic pain programs "(e) Development of psychosocial sequelae that limits function or recovery after the initial incident, including anxiety, fear-avoidance, depression, sleep disorders, or nonorganic illness behaviors (with a reasonable probability to respond to treatment intervention); (f) The diagnosis is not primarily a personality disorder or psychological condition without a physical component; (g) There is evidence of continued use of prescription pain medications (particularly those that may result in tolerance, dependence or abuse) without evidence of improvement in pain or function." While the treating physician does document the use of opioids and anti-depressants, the treating physician has not provided detailed documentation of chronic pain treatment trials and failures to meet all six MTUS criteria for a chronic pain management program. As such the request for a clinical pain psychologist is not necessary and hence, the entire request is not medically necessary.