

Case Number:	CM15-0051973		
Date Assigned:	03/25/2015	Date of Injury:	07/16/2014
Decision Date:	05/01/2015	UR Denial Date:	03/13/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	03/19/2015

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

Certification(s)/Specialty: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, Pain Management, 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:

This 56-year-old male sustained an industrial injury to bilateral ankles on 7/16/14. The injured worker was diagnosed with bilateral tibia pilon fractures and left common femoral fracture. Previous treatment included x-rays, electromyography, open reduction internal fixation of bilateral ankle fractures, physical therapy, Moon boots, home exercise and medications. In a progress note dated 2/18/15, the injured worker complained of bilateral ankle pain with numbness and decreased sensation. The injured worker rated his pain 5-7/10 on the visual analog scale. Physical exam was remarkable for stiffness over the first metatarsophalangeal joint, decreased sensation along both ankles and positive Tinel's sign on the left. Current diagnoses included status post open reduction internal fixation of right distal tibia pilon fracture, status post open reduction internal fixation left common femoral fracture with closed reduction of the tibia and internal fixation and left tarsal tunnel syndrome. The treatment plan included weight bearing as tolerated with Moon boot, continuing home exercise, using neuropathic cream, bilateral electromyography, and a refill of Ibuprofen.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Home health nurse: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Home Health Services Page(s): 51.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Home Health Services Page(s): 51.

Decision rationale: The patient sustained bilateral tibia pilon fracture in July 2014. He has degenerative arthritis in his ankle and reports significant pain. His orthopedic surgeon has released him to weight bear as tolerated while wearing moon boots. On the surface, this request for home health nurse does not adhere to MTUS 2009. There is no mention of any services that require a nurse such as wound care, administration of IV antibiotics or other medical services. MTUS 2009 states this care is reserved for individuals that are homebound. This request for home health nursing is denied since there are no medical services requested for the home health nurse to perform.

Housekeeper: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Home Health Services Page(s): 51.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Home Health Services Page(s): 51.

Decision rationale: MTUS 2009 states that housekeeping is not considered medical treatment. There are no extenuating circumstances provided in the medical record, which would explain why housekeeping would be needed in this circumstance. The patient appears to be doing well enough to weight bear as tolerated after sustaining significant fractures to both ankles. Based upon the lack of an explanation as to why housekeeping is needed in spite of the guidelines, this request for housekeeping is denied.