

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0053884		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	03/27/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	04/07/2014
<b>Decision Date:</b>	05/01/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	03/06/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	03/20/2015

### 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: Massachusetts

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

### 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 46 year old, male who sustained a work related injury on 4/7/14. The diagnoses have included cervical strain/sprain, cervical radiculopathy and C5-6 herniated nucleus pulposus. Treatments have included physical therapy, x-rays of cervical spine, an MRI of cervical spine, medications, heat/ice and rest. In the PR-2 dated 2/18/15, there are no subjective or objective findings noted. The treatment plan for this visit was for physical therapy. In the PR-2 dated 11/19/14, the injured worker complains of neck and right arm pain. He has cervical spine pain along the left trapezial ridge. He has pain that radiates down left arm. He has pain with extreme range of motion.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Physical therapy for the cervical spine, three times weekly for four weeks:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Physical Medicine Guidelines.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) (1) Chronic pain, Physical medicine treatment. (2) Preface, Physical Therapy Guidelines.

**Decision rationale:** The claimant sustained a work-related injury in April 2014 and continues to be treated for chronic radiating neck pain. Prior treatments have included physical therapy. In this case, the claimant is more than one-year status post injury and therefore, the chronic pain treatment guidelines apply. In terms of physical therapy treatment for chronic pain, guidelines recommend a six visit clinical trial with a formal reassessment prior to continuing therapy. In this case, the claimant has had physical therapy. Patients are expected to continue active therapies at home. Ongoing compliance with a home exercise program would be expected and would not require continued skilled physical therapy oversight. Providing additional skilled physical therapy services would not reflect a fading of treatment frequency and would promote dependence on therapy provided treatments. The claimant has no other identified impairment that would preclude performing such a program. The additional physical therapy was not medically necessary.