

Case Number:	CM15-0056591		
Date Assigned:	04/01/2015	Date of Injury:	10/16/2013
Decision Date:	05/13/2015	UR Denial Date:	02/23/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	03/25/2015

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

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 42 year old female with an industrial injury dated 10/16/2013. Her diagnoses include pain in thoracic spine, lumbago and unspecified anxiety. Prior treatment includes diagnostics, medications and physical therapy. She presents on 01/28/2015 with complaints of continuous stabbing and achy upper back pain with radiation to the lower extremities. Physical exam revealed antalgic gait with tenderness to palpation over the upper lumbar spine to lower thoracic spine region in mid back. The provider notes the injured worker continues to have ongoing back pain despite therapy. Treatment plan included referral to a neurosurgeon for surgical management and treatment for low back pain, medications, psychological consultation, functional capacity evaluation for lumbar spine and durable medical equipment to include a muscle stimulator with heat and cold pack for lumbar spine.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Multi Stim unit (5 month rental) (to include supplies: electrodes, lead wires, and adaptor):
Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 114-118.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Transcutaneous Electrotherapy, TENS for chronic pain, pages 114-117.

Decision rationale: Per MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines, ongoing treatment is not advisable if there are no signs of objective progress and functional restoration has not been demonstrated. Specified criteria for the use of TENS Unit include trial in adjunction to ongoing treatment modalities within the functional restoration approach as appropriate for documented chronic intractable pain of at least three months duration with failed evidence of other appropriate pain modalities tried such as medication. From the submitted reports, the patient has received extensive conservative medical treatment to include chronic analgesics and other medication, extensive physical therapy, activity modifications, yet the patient has remained symptomatic and functionally impaired. There is no documentation on how or what Multi stim unit is requested, nor is there any documented short-term or long-term goals of treatment with the unit. There is no evidence for change in functional status, increased in ADLs, decreased VAS score, medication usage, or treatment utilization from the treatment already rendered. The Multi Stim unit (5 month rental) (to include supplies: electrodes, lead wires, and adaptor) is not medically necessary and appropriate.