

Case Number:	CM14-0170348		
Date Assigned:	10/20/2014	Date of Injury:	03/08/2012
Decision Date:	11/21/2014	UR Denial Date:	09/23/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/15/2014

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. The expert reviewer is Board Certified in Psychologist and is licensed to practice in Utah. 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/services. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

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 is a 52-year-old female with a 3/8/12 date of injury. The patient suffered a head injury when a metal pole on an easel tipped, striking her in the left parietal area. The UR decision dated 9/23/14 refers to a 7/25/14 progress report, however, this report was not provided for review. According to this report, the patient has residuals from a TBI with post-traumatic migraine. She is having an increase in cognitive problems. Objective findings: no changes/gains in cognitive skills. Diagnostic impression: closed head injury with TBI residuals, post traumatic headaches, chronic cervical and thoracic strain. Treatment to date: medication management, activity modification. A UR decision dated 9/23/14 denied the request for cognitive retraining 1-3 months. The records provided for review do not document information regarding the specific cognitive deficits for this patient resulting from her head injury, nor is there documentation of prior cognitive therapy the patient may have had, nor discussion of a specific retraining plan with goals for this patient.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Cognitive retraining 1-3 months per RFA dated 7/25/14, qty: 3.00: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Integrated Treatment/Disability Guidelines, Head

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

Decision rationale: CA MTUS does not address this issue. ODG recommends cognitive skills retraining, especially when the retraining is focused on relearning specific skills. For concussion/mild traumatic brain injury, comprehensive neuropsychological/cognitive testing is not recommended during the first 30 days post injury. Training needs to be focused, structured, monitored, and as ecologically relevant as possible for optimum effect. Rehabilitation programs emphasizing cognitive-behavioral approaches to the retraining of planning and problem-solving skills can be effective in ameliorating identified deficits in reasoning, planning, concept formation, mental flexibility, aspects of attention and awareness, and purposeful behavior. However, in the present case, the patient has a date of injury in 2012, and it is unclear if this is a new request or if the patient has had prior cognitive therapy. There is no documentation of her response if she has had prior therapy. In addition, there is no documentation of the specific cognitive deficits that are to be addressed with cognitive retraining. Therefore, the request for Cognitive retraining 1-3 months per RFA dated 7/25/14, qty: 3.00 was not medically necessary.