

Case Number:	CM14-0180356		
Date Assigned:	11/05/2014	Date of Injury:	04/01/1986
Decision Date:	12/09/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/23/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/30/2014

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 Family Practice and is licensed to practice in California. 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:

The 57 yr. old female claimant sustained a work injury on 4/1/86 involving the low back. She was diagnosed with lumbar spondylosis. A progress note on 10/14/14 indicated the claimant had continued back pain. Exam findings were notable for slow ambulation. He was additional diagnosed with L4-L5 degenerative disc disease based on an MRI the previous month in addition to obesity. A recommendation was made for an exercise program and a referral was given for a Bariatric Consultation.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Referral to [REDACTED] for Bariatrics Evaluation and Treatment: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine guidelines, Chapter 7 - Independent Medical Examinations and Consultations regarding referrals.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Page(s): 127. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation National Obesity Guidelines

Decision rationale: According to the ACOEM guidelines, a specialist referral may be made if the diagnosis is uncertain, extremely complex, when psychosocial factors are present, or when

the plan or course of care may benefit from additional expertise. A consultation is used to aid in diagnosis, prognosis, therapeutic management, determination of medical stability, and permanent residual loss and/or examinees' fitness for return to work. In this case, the claimant was diagnosed with obesity but a weight or BMI was not provided. In addition, weight change from baseline was not provided. According to the ODG guidelines, the initial goal of weight loss therapy is to reduce body weight by approximately 10 percent from baseline. Weight loss at the rate of 1 to 2 lb/week (calorie deficit of 500 to 1,000 kcal/day) commonly occurs for up to 6 months. After 6 months, the rate of weight loss usually declines and weight plateaus because of a lesser energy expenditure at the lower weight. After 6 months of weight loss treatment, efforts to maintain weight loss should be put in place. If more weight loss is needed, another attempt at weight reduction can be made. This will require further adjustment of the diet and physical activity prescriptions. For patients unable to achieve significant weight reduction, prevention of further weight gain is an important goal; such patients may also need to participate in a weight management program. In this case, there is no indication of calorie reduction, completion of an exercise program or other behavioral interventions. There is no indication of failure or regaining of weight after prior attempts to lose weight. Therefore the request for a Referral to [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for Bariatrics Evaluation and Treatment is not medically necessary.