

Case Number:	CM14-0021032		
Date Assigned:	02/21/2014	Date of Injury:	09/18/2012
Decision Date:	06/24/2014	UR Denial Date:	01/08/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	01/09/2014

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 Neurological Surgery 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 injured worker is a 51-year-old male who was injured on September 18, 2012. The progress note dated December 10, 2013 documents the injured has had right knee pain that has failed conservative measures with knee arthroscopy, cortisone injections, and Viscosupplementation as well as physical therapy and anti-inflammatory medications. The clinician indicates the intention to proceed with total knee arthroplasty. The utilization review in question was rendered on January 8, 2014. The reviewer noncertified the request for an assistant surgeon noting the request for total knee arthroplasty was not substantiated.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

ASSISTANT SURGEON: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation American Association of Orthopedic Surgeons Position Statement Reimbursement of the First Assistant at Surgery in Orthopedics

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence: <http://www.facs.org/ahp/pubs/pas-2013.pdf>; Physicians as an Assistant at Surgery: 2013 Study; The study includes participation by the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons

Decision rationale: The above referenced document indicates an assistant at surgery is almost always necessary for total knee arthroplasty. As review does not specifically address the medical necessity of the total knee arthroplasty, it is assumed that the arthroplasty has been authorized. In the setting of total knee arthroplasty, it is medically necessary to have a surgical assistant.