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| Case Number: | CM14-0166449 | | |
| Date Assigned: | 10/13/2014 | Date of Injury: | 10/16/2006 |
| Decision Date: | 01/09/2015 | UR Denial Date: | 09/18/2014 |
| Priority: | Standard | Application Received: | 10/09/2014 |

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 Emergency Medicine, and is licensed to practice in New York. 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 patient is a 55-year-old male who was injured on October 16, 2006. The patient continued to experience pain in low back, neck, right groin, and right shoulder. Physical examination was notable for pain over the pubic ramus, decreased range of motion of the lumbar spine, and normal strength in the bilateral lower extremities. Diagnoses included right inguinal hernia repair status post repair with chronic pain and chronic low back pain. Treatment included medications and surgery. Request for authorization for [REDACTED] restoration program #160 hours was submitted for consideration.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

1 [REDACTED] restoration program 160 hours: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Pain interventions and Guidelines Page(s): 49.

Decision rationale: Functional restoration programs (FRPs) are recommended, although research is still ongoing as to how to most appropriately screen for inclusion in these programs. FRPs are interdisciplinary pain programs and emphasize the importance of function over the

elimination of pain. FRPs incorporate components of exercise progression with disability management and psychosocial intervention. Long-term evidence suggests that the benefit of these programs diminishes over time, but still remains positive when compared to cohorts that did not receive an intensive program. A Cochrane review suggests that there is strong evidence that intensive multidisciplinary rehabilitation with functional restoration reduces pain and improves function of patients with low back pain. The evidence is contradictory when evaluating the programs in terms of vocational outcomes. Treatment is not suggested for longer than 2 weeks without evidence of demonstrated efficacy as documented by subjective and objective gains. In this case the requested 160 hours is 4 weeks of treatment. The duration of requested treatment is longer than the 2 weeks recommended to show evidence of functional improvement. The request is not medically necessary.