

Case Number:	CM14-0215154		
Date Assigned:	01/02/2015	Date of Injury:	01/06/1999
Decision Date:	02/25/2015	UR Denial Date:	12/09/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	12/22/2014

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. 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: Psychologist

CLINICAL CASE SUMMARY

The expert reviewer developed the following clinical case summary based on a review of the case file, including all medical records:

According to the provided medical records, this 66 year old male patient had a severe work-related injury that occurred on January 6, 1999 during the course of his employment for [REDACTED]. The injury was reportedly the result of his falling off of a rolling safety ladder when a steel work stand collapsed resulting in loss of consciousness and head injury as well as substantial injuries to the low back, head, neck, pelvis, left elbow. He is diagnosed medically, with the following partial list: closed head trauma, cervical spine sprain/strain with cervicogenic headaches and degenerative disc disease; lumbar spine sprain/strain with degenerative disc disease; left elbow sprain/strain and left hip sprain/strain. This IMR will address only issues related to his Psyche as they relate to the current requested treatment. According to a psychological group treatment progress note from December 11, 2014, the patient participated in group and was "outspoken, loud and anxious and shared constantly but was difficult to understand what he was meaning by his statements, the group focused on helping him to learn cognitive behavioral techniques including utilizing thoughts to modify moods and behaviors, learning positive self talk and how to identify different types of harmful or counterproductive thoughts and to avoid them and encourage positive styles as well as other skills." A prior treatment progress note stated that the patient "continue to learn how activities affect your mood and he created a plan to overcome depression by establishing goals." His mood was described as depressed, anxious, sad." It is unclear how many sessions of group psychological education he is already had, and authorization was found for 12 sessions from September 18, 2014 that appears to have been authorized. His prior psychological treatment history is unclear, however it was

noted that he saw a psychologist from 2002 to 2004. Is also noted that he saw a psychiatrist internist from January 2012 to January 2013. Although the date that the current course of psychological treatment/care was initiated is unclear, it appears possibly to a begun sometime in late August 2014 with an unknown quantity of treatment sessions provided. He had a comprehensive psychological evaluation from August 7, 2014 and was diagnosed with: Adjustment Disorder with Anxious and Depressed Mood. He reports anxiety, tension and irritability and depression and related symptoms on an occasional basis, insomnia, poor memory/And alternative diagnosis from a psychiatric evaluation was not consistent with the diagnosis of and adjustment disorder and diagnosed him with: Anxiety Disorder Not otherwise specified with depressive features. A Request was made for 12 sessions of group educational psychological therapy, the request was non-certified by utilization review without modification; this IMR will address a request to overturn that decision. A request was made for 12 sessions of group psychological education, the request was non-certified; this IMR will address a request to overturn that decision.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Group Pysch Education x12 sessions: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 319-320.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Part 2, behavioral interventions, cognitive behavioral therapy Page(s): 23-24. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Mental illness and stress chapter, topic: cognitive behavioral therapy, psychotherapy guidelines, November 2014 update.

Decision rationale: According to the official disability guidelines, patients may be offered 13-20 sessions maximum of cognitive behavioral therapy if progress is being made. Although several treatment progress reports were provided, there was no indication of how many sessions the patient has already received total to date. There was no discussion of the patient's prior psychological treatment in prior years and whether or not that resulted in substantial and lasting benefit to the patient. With regards to the current course of treatment it appears to started sometime either in August or September 2014 and possibly he has received 12 sessions. The progress notes that were provided did not discuss patient improvements as a result of the prior unspecified quantity of treatment that was provided. Additional psychological treatment is contingent upon the patient exhibiting significant psychological symptomology, documented benefit from prior sessions including objective functional improvements (for example increased activities of daily living, reduction in dependency on medical care, and reduction in work activities or increased functioning) as well as the total number of sessions being consistent with treatment guidelines. The request for Group Pysch Education is not medically necessary.