

Case Number:	CM15-0011734		
Date Assigned:	01/29/2015	Date of Injury:	02/22/2006
Decision Date:	03/24/2015	UR Denial Date:	12/12/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	01/21/2015

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: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

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 48 year old male who sustained an industrial related injury on 2/22/06. The injured worker had complaints of right buttock pain with radiation down the right lower extremity. Physical examination findings included tenderness to palpation of the lumbar paraspinal muscles and over the right piriformis with noted spasticity. Medications included Norco and Cymbalta. Diagnoses included lumbar spondylosis and myofascial pain syndrome. A MR neurogram was recommended to evaluate for impingement syndrome in the right buttock and assess for piriformis syndrome. The treating physician requested authorization for a MR Neurogram. On 12/12/14 the request was non-certified. The utilization review physician noted the guidelines do not address MR neurography. The indications and justification for this investigation, anticipated information, and its implication on management strategy was non documented therefore the request was non-certified.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

MR Neurogram: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation chapter 'Lower back - lumbar & thoracic (acute and Chronic)' and topic 'MR neurography'

Decision rationale: The 48 year old patient presents with persistent pain in the right buttock that radiates down the right lower extremity, as per progress report dated 12/03/14. The request is for MR NEUROGRAM. There is no RFA for this case, and the patient's date of injury is 02/22/06. The pain is rated at 5/10, as per progress report dated 12/03/14. The patient has sleep issues, secondary to pain. Diagnoses included lumbar spondylosis and myofascial pain syndrome. Medications, as per the same progress report, included Norco and Cymbalta. MRI of the lumbar spine, dated 06/05/14, revealed spondylosis and linear lipoma of filum terminale. The patient is temporarily totally disabled, as per progress report dated 12/03/14. ODG guidelines, chapter 'Lower back - lumbar & thoracic (acute and Chronic)' and topic 'MR neurography' states that "MR neurography may be useful in isolating diagnoses that do not lend themselves to back surgery, such as sciatica caused by piriformis syndrome in the hip." In this case, a request for MR neurogram is seen in progress reports dated 12/03/14 and 10/16/14. In the reports, the treater states that the purpose of the MR neurogram is to "evaluate for impingement syndrome in the right buttock and especially to assess for piriformis muscle syndrome." ODG guidelines also support the use of MR neurography to diagnose piriformis syndrome. Hence, the request IS medically necessary.