

Case Number:	CM15-0014914		
Date Assigned:	02/02/2015	Date of Injury:	06/17/2011
Decision Date:	05/27/2015	UR Denial Date:	01/13/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	01/26/2015

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 56-year-old female, with a reported date of injury of 06/17/2011. The diagnoses include right carpal tunnel syndrome, and severe stenosing tenosynovitis of the right thumb. Treatments to date have included right carpal tunnel release, tenovagotomy of the right thumb, and therapy. The medical report dated 12/23/2014 indicates that the injured worker was status post right carpal tunnel release ad tenovagotomy of the right thumb. There was no further numbness or tingling. It was noted that the injured worker had some weakness. The physical examination showed full flexion with 65 degrees of wrist extension, a well-healed surgical scar, mild swelling and tenderness at the surgical sites, right thumb interphalangeal flexion at 40 degrees with full extension without snapping or locking. The treating physician requested occupational therapy for the right wrist.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Occupation therapy 3x4 for the right wrist: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Postsurgical Treatment Guidelines.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Postsurgical Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 15.

Decision rationale: Per the 12/23/14 report the patient presents with mild swelling and tenderness at the surgical site s/p right thumb ECTR and tenovagotomy 11/21/14. The current request is for Occupational Therapy 3x4 for the Right Wrist per the 12/23/14 report. The 01/13/15 utilization review states the RFA is dated 01/05/15. The patient is Temporarily Totally Disabled for 6 weeks as of 01/12/15. MTUS Carpal Tunnel Syndrome page 15 allows postsurgical treatment for endoscopic and open 3-8 visits over 3-5 weeks. Postsurgical physical medicine treatment period: 3 months. The treating physician cites the 12/03/14 Physical Therapy report showing improved grip and pinch strengths and continued hypersensitivity at the surgical site and recommends "continued" physical therapy to improve upon the patient's deficits. It is unclear from the reports provided for review how many post-operative treatment sessions the patient has received. The 12/03/14 Physical Therapy progress notes provided for review show the patient received at least 3 visits from 12/03/14 to 01/06/15 for postsurgical treatment of the 11/21/14 procedure. The 01/13/15 utilization review states that 12 postoperative physical therapy visits were previously certified; however, it is not clear how many of these sessions were received. No objective goals, fading of treatment or transition to a home treatment program are discussed. Furthermore, the 12 visits requested even when not combined with the at least 3 prior sessions received exceed what is allowed by the MTUS guidelines. The request is not medically necessary.