

Case Number:	CM15-0019326		
Date Assigned:	02/09/2015	Date of Injury:	06/30/2001
Decision Date:	03/31/2015	UR Denial Date:	01/08/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	02/02/2015

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: New Jersey, Michigan, California
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Neurology, Neuromuscular Medicine

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 47 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 6/30/2000. She reports neck and arm pain. Diagnoses include cervical herniated nucleus pulposus, post ulnar shortening surgery, tear of the luno-triquetral ligament, status post bilateral wrist arthroscopic debridement, bone graft to a non-union ulna and status post hardware removal and revision. Treatments to date include surgeries, chiropractic care and medication management. A progress note from the treating provider dated 10/17/2014 and 10/27/2014 indicates the injured worker reported neck pain and left upper extremity and bilateral wrist pain. On 1/8/2015, Utilization Review non-certified the request for 8 sessions of physical therapy to the bilateral wrist and left shoulder, citing MTUS and ACOEM.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

8 Sessions of Physical Therapy, bilateral wrist and left shoulder: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Physical Medicine Page(s): 98.

Decision rationale: According to MTUS guidelines, Recommended for chronic pain if caused by musculoskeletal conditions. Manual Therapy is widely used in the treatment of musculoskeletal pain. The intended goal or effect of Manual Medicine is the achievement of positive symptomatic or objective measurable gains in functional improvement that facilitate progression in the patient's therapeutic exercise program and return to productive activities. Manipulation is manual therapy that moves a joint beyond the physiologic range-of-motion but not beyond the anatomic range-of-motion. According to MTUS guidelines, physical medicine, Recommended as indicated below. Passive therapy (those treatment modalities that do not require energy expenditure on the part of the patient) can provide short term relief during the early phases of pain treatment and are directed at controlling symptoms such as pain, inflammation and swelling and to improve the rate of healing soft tissue injuries. They can be used sparingly with active therapies to help control swelling, pain and inflammation during the rehabilitation process. Active therapy is based on the philosophy that therapeutic exercise and/or activity are beneficial for restoring flexibility, strength, endurance, function, range of motion, and can alleviate discomfort. The patient underwent an undetermined number of physical therapy for his shoulder without clear and objective documentation of pain and functional improvement. MTUS guidelines recommended up to 6 months post surgical physical therapy treatment period. Therefore, the request for 8 Sessions of Physical Therapy, bilateral wrist and left shoulder is not medically necessary.