

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0111737		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	06/18/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	04/27/2009
<b>Decision Date:</b>	07/16/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	05/27/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	06/09/2015

### 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, Alabama, 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 65-year-old female, with a reported date of injury of 10/13/1994. The diagnoses include post lumbar laminectomy syndrome, major depressive disorder, degeneration of lumbar or lumbosacral intervertebral disc, acquired spondylolisthesis, sacroiliitis, neck pain, chronic pain due to trauma, cervical radiculopathy, and thoracic or lumbosacral neuritis or radiculitis. Treatments to date have included lumbar spine surgery, lumbar transforaminal epidural steroid injections, heat, ice, massage, physical therapy, oral medications, and x-rays of the lumbar spine. The medical report dated 05/13/2015 indicates that the injured worker had mid back, low back, gluteal area, bilateral arm, neck, and bilateral thigh pain. The pain radiated to the bilateral ankles, right arm, bilateral calves, bilateral feet, and bilateral thighs. Her pain was rated 8 out of 10 without medications, and 4 out of 10 with medications. In the last month, on average, the injured worker rated the intensity of her pain 7 out of 10. The physical examination showed tenderness of the cervical spine, moderate pain with cervical range of motion, tenderness of the lumbar spine, and moderate pain with lumbar range of motion. It was noted that the injured worker tried to return to work but was unable to do so. The treating physician requested eight pain management consultation visits.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Pain management consult 6 visits: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Page(s): 127.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Chronic pain programs, early intervention Page(s): 32-33.

**Decision rationale:** According to MTUS guidelines, the presence of red flags may indicate the need for specialty consultation. In addition, the requesting physician should provide a documentation supporting the medical necessity for a pain management evaluation with a specialist. The documentation should include the reasons, the specific goals and end point for using the expertise of a specialist. In the chronic pain programs, early intervention section of MTUS guidelines stated: "Recommendations for identification of patients that may benefit from early intervention via a multidisciplinary approach: (a) The patient's response to treatment falls outside of the established norms for their specific diagnosis without a physical explanation to explain symptom severity. (b) The patient exhibits excessive pain behavior and/or complaints compared to that expected from the diagnosis. (c) There is a previous medical history of delayed recovery. (d) The patient is not a candidate where surgery or other treatments would clearly be warranted. (e) Inadequate employer support. (f) Loss of employment for greater than 4 weeks. The most discernible indication of at risk status is lost time from work of 4 to 6 weeks. (Mayer 2003)" There is no clear documentation that the patient needs 6 pain management evaluations as per MTUS criteria. There is no clear documentation that the patient had delayed recovery and a response to medications that falls outside the established norm. The provider did not document the reasons, the specific goals and end point for using the expertise of a specialist. There no rational form ordering 6 consecutive pain management evaluation without knowing the outcome of the first one. Therefore, the request for Pain management consult 6 visits is not medically necessary.