

Case Number:	CM15-0118302		
Date Assigned:	06/26/2015	Date of Injury:	10/02/2012
Decision Date:	07/27/2015	UR Denial Date:	06/17/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	06/18/2015

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: Arizona, California
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Family Practice

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 (n) 60 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on 10/02/12. He reported pain in his bilateral hands related to repetitive motions. The injured worker was diagnosed as having carpal tunnel syndrome, arthralgia and wrist pain. Treatment to date has included physical therapy, carpal tunnel injections, oral steroids and carpal tunnel surgery. An EMG/NCV study on 3/7/14 showed no abnormalities. As of the PR2 dated 5/15/15, the injured worker reports pain in his left hand. Objective findings include a positive Tinel's sign over the left medial nerve. The treating physician requested a functional restoration program evaluation.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Functional restoration program evaluation: Overturned

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines functional restoration program Page(s): 30-33.

Decision rationale: According to the guidelines, outpatient pain rehabilitation programs may be considered medically necessary when all of the following criteria are met: (1) An adequate and thorough evaluation has been made, including baseline functional testing so follow-up with the same test can note functional improvement; (2) Previous methods of treating chronic pain have been unsuccessful and there is an absence of other options likely to result in significant clinical improvement; (3) The patient has a significant loss of ability to function independently resulting from the chronic pain; (4) The patient is not a candidate where surgery or other treatments would clearly be warranted (if a goal of treatment is to prevent or avoid controversial or optional surgery, a trial of 10 visits may be implemented to assess whether surgery may be avoided); (5) The patient exhibits motivation to change, and is willing to forgo secondary gains, including disability payments to effect this change; and (6) Negative predictors of success above have been addressed. The claimant has a history and desire to improve. He has failed prior conservative measures, the request for the functional restoration program evaluation to determine candidacy is appropriate is medically necessary.