

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0119556		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	06/30/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	03/19/2012
<b>Decision Date:</b>	07/31/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	05/26/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	06/22/2015

### 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: Texas, 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:

This is a 57 year old female patient, who sustained an industrial injury on 3/19/2012. She reported acute pain to the low back while carrying a food tray that almost fell and continuous use trauma. Diagnoses include bilateral carpal tunnel syndrome, sacroiliac sprain/strain, lumbar and cervical disc bulge with radiculitis, internal derangement of knees, bilateral rotator cuff syndrome, status post left shoulder surgery in 2015 and right shoulder surgery in 2013. Per the doctor's note dated 5/20/2015, she had complaints of increased low back pain, neck pain, right shoulder pain, increased right knee pain, and numbness and tingling into bilateral hands. The physical examination revealed positive cervical compression test bilaterally, positive bilateral straight leg raise tests, tenderness and muscle spasms throughout cervical and lumbar regions and a positive McMurray's test to bilateral knees. The medications list includes vicodin. She has undergone left shoulder surgery on 2/10/2014 and 5/11/2015 and right shoulder surgery on 1/28/2013. She has had the electromyogram and nerve conduction studies (EMG/NCS) in 2013 which revealed bilateral carpal tunnel syndrome and median nerve entrapment at the right wrist; lumbar MRI, cervical MRI, bilateral shoulder MRI and bilateral knee MRI. She has had prior conservative treatment including activity modification, Vicodin, therapeutic injections and post-operative physical therapy. The plan of care included referral to a hand surgeon.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Referral to hand surgeon:** Overturned

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 11 Forearm, Wrist, and Hand Complaints Page(s): 270.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM), 2nd Edition, (2004), Chapter 7, Independent Medical Examinations and Consultations, page 127.

**Decision rationale:** Per the cited guidelines, "The occupational health practitioner may refer to other specialists if a diagnosis is uncertain or extremely complex, when psychosocial factors are present, or when the plan or course of care may benefit from additional expertise." Per the records provided patient had neck pain, right shoulder pain, and numbness and tingling into bilateral hands. The physical examination revealed positive cervical compression test bilaterally. Patient had an EMG/NCS which revealed abnormal findings - bilateral carpal tunnel syndrome. Referral to a hand surgeon is medically appropriate to evaluate her bilateral hand/wrist symptoms. The request of Referral to a hand surgeon is medically appropriate and necessary.