

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0120842		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	07/01/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	11/14/2014
<b>Decision Date:</b>	07/30/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	06/09/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	06/23/2015

### 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, Florida, California

Certification(s)/Specialty: Preventive Medicine, Occupational 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 54 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on November 14, 2014. The injured worker reported right wrist pain due to twisting while moving objects during regular duties at work. The injured worker was diagnosed as having unspecified derangement of the hand. Treatment to date has included x-ray, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), physical therapy, injection and medication. Several documents within the submitted medical records are difficult to decipher. A progress note dated May 18, 2015 provides the injured worker complains of right wrist pain. Physical exam notes the injured worker is still having pain even though he had an injection previously. The plan is for additional physical therapy.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Physical therapy right wrist 3 times a week for 4 weeks: Upheld**

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

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines  
Page(s): 98 of 127.

**Decision rationale:** This claimant was injured in November 2014. The diagnosis was an unspecified derangement of the hand. Treatment to date included an x-ray, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), physical therapy, injection and medication. As of May 2015, there was still right wrist pain. Physical exam noted the injured worker is still having pain even though he had an injection previously. The request now was for more therapy. The MTUS does permit physical therapy in chronic situations, noting that one should allow for fading of treatment frequency (from up to 3 visits per week to 1 or less), plus active self-directed home Physical Medicine. The conditions mentioned are Myalgia and myositis, unspecified (ICD9 729.1): 9-10 visits over 8 weeks; Neuralgia, neuritis, and radiculitis, unspecified (ICD9 729.2) 8-10 visits over 4 weeks; and Reflex sympathetic dystrophy (CRPS) (ICD9 337.2): 24 visits over 16 weeks. This claimant does not have these conditions. Moreover, after several documented sessions of therapy, it is not clear why the patient would not be independent with self-care at this point. Also, there are especially strong caveats in the MTUS/ACOEM guidelines against over treatment in the chronic situation supporting the clinical notion that the move to independence and an active, independent home program is clinically in the best interest of the patient. They cite: "Although mistreating or under treating pain is of concern, an even greater risk for the physician is over treating the chronic pain patient. Over treatment often results in irreparable harm to the patient's socioeconomic status, home life, personal relationships, and quality of life in general." A patient's complaints of pain should be acknowledged. Patient and clinician should remain focused on the ultimate goal of rehabilitation leading to optimal functional recovery, decreased healthcare utilization, and maximal self actualization. The outcomes of prior therapy is not noted. Also, it is not clear why the claimant is not handling rehabilitative needs now through an independent home program. This request for more skilled, monitored therapy was appropriately non-certified. Therefore, the requested treatment is not medically necessary.