

Case Number:	CM15-0129877		
Date Assigned:	07/16/2015	Date of Injury:	02/26/2013
Decision Date:	08/18/2015	UR Denial Date:	06/17/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	07/06/2015

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: California

Certification(s)/Specialty: Psychologist

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 52 year old female who sustained an industrial injury on February 26, 2013. She has reported injury to the wrist and has been diagnosed with release carpal tunnel syndrome and ulnar nerve. Treatment has included medical imaging, medications, and surgery. Examination showed that all the wounds were healing nicely. No signs of infection. Motor power was well preserved. Two point was normal. The treatment request included group medical psychotherapy, once weekly, medical hypnotherapy/relaxation training, once weekly, and a follow up visit, once weekly.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Group medical psychotherapy, once weekly for 8 weeks: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG).

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Cognitive therapy for depression.

Decision rationale: Based on the review of the medical records, the injured worker completed an initial psychological evaluation with [REDACTED] on 7/19/13. Since that time, she has received psychological services including group medical psychotherapy, hypnotherapy, and office visit/follow-ups. The most recent progress report, dated 5/22/15, fails to indicate the number of group therapy and/or hypnotherapy sessions completed to date. It also fails to provide adequate information regarding the progress and improvements that have been made as a result of the completed sessions. In fact, the progress is noted as, "Patient has made some improvement towards current treatment goals as evidenced by patient reports of improved mood and ability to cope with stressors due to treatment." This statement remains too vague and generalized and does not offer any measurable information. The ODG specifically recommends "up to 13-20 visits...if progress is being made." It further suggests that "in cases of severe Major Depression or PTSD, up to 50 sessions if progress is being made." Without the relevant information regarding the number of completed sessions and the exact progress that has been made as a result of receiving those sessions, the need for additional treatment cannot be determined. As a result, the request for an additional 8 group medical psychotherapy sessions is not medically necessary.

Medical hypnotherapy/relaxation training, once weekly for 8 weeks: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Hypnotherapy.

Decision rationale: Based on the review of the medical records, the injured worker completed an initial psychological evaluation with [REDACTED] on 7/19/13. Since that time, she has received psychological services including group medical psychotherapy, hypnotherapy, and office visit/follow-ups. The most recent progress report, dated 5/22/15, fails to indicate the number of group therapy and/or hypnotherapy sessions completed to date. It also fails to provide adequate information regarding the progress and improvements that have been made as a result of the completed sessions. In fact, the progress is noted as, "Patient has made some improvement towards current treatment goals as evidenced by patient reports of improved mood and ability to cope with stressors due to treatment." This statement remains too vague and generalized and does not offer any measurable information. Regarding the use of hypnotherapy, the ODG recommends that the "number of visits should be contained within the total number of psychotherapy visits." in regards to psychotherapy, the ODG specifically recommends "up to 13-20 visits...if progress is being made." It further suggests that "in cases of severe Major Depression or PTSD, up to 50 sessions if progress is being made." Without the relevant information regarding the number of completed sessions and the exact progress that has been made as a result of receiving those sessions, the need for additional treatment, including hypnotherapy, cannot be determined. As a result, the request for 8 medical hypnotherapy / relaxation training sessions is not medically necessary.

Follow up visit once weekly for 1 week: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Office Visits.

Decision rationale: Based on the review of the medical records, the injured worker completed an initial psychological evaluation with [REDACTED] on 7/19/13. Since that time, she has received psychological services including group medical psychotherapy, hypnotherapy, and office visit/follow-ups. The most recent progress report, dated 5/22/15, fails to indicate the number of group therapy and/or hypnotherapy sessions completed to date. It also fails to provide adequate information regarding the progress and improvements that have been made as a result of the completed sessions. In fact, the progress is noted as, "Patient has made some improvement towards current treatment goals as evidenced by patient reports of improved mood and ability to cope with stressors due to treatment." This statement remains too vague and generalized and does not offer any measurable information. Additionally, there is no rationale offered as to the purpose of the requested office visit. It appears that the visit is to coincide with additional treatment. However, because of the limited information within the progress reports, the need for additional treatment is not necessary. As a result, the request for an additional office visit is not medically necessary.