

Case Number:	CM15-0170827		
Date Assigned:	09/11/2015	Date of Injury:	10/03/2013
Decision Date:	10/09/2015	UR Denial Date:	08/03/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	08/31/2015

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: Massachusetts

Certification(s)/Specialty: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, Pain Management

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 73 year old male sustained an industrial injury to the right ankle on 10-3-13. The injured worker was diagnosed with a right ankle bimalleolar ankle fracture dislocation. The injured worker underwent open reduction internal fixation right ankle fracture. The injured worker suffered a postoperative wound complication. The injured worker subsequently underwent hardware removal. In the most recent documentation submitted for review, a request for authorization dated 9-29-14, the physician stated that the injured worker was doing markedly better with minimal to no right ankle pain. The injured worker continued to have intermittent wound break down. The injured worker used aloe vera and petroleum jelly for wound care. Physical exam was remarkable for right ankle with well-healed scars; wound completely covered except for a small area of skin breakdown without significant granulation tissue, drainage or redness, 5 out of 5 motor strength throughout, intact neurovascular exam and normal right ankle range of motion. Current diagnoses included right ankle wound, status post open bimalleolar fracture dislocation and status post removal of hardware right ankle. The injured worker was released to full work duty. The treatment plan included a functional capacity evaluation. On 8-3-15, Utilization Review noncertified a request for 1 physical performance functional capacity evaluation noting lack of documentation of an updated patient assessment that addressed the necessity of the request and no mention of a plan to proceed with a work hardening program after the evaluation and citing CA MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

1 Physical performance functional capacity evaluation: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Ankle and Foot Complaints 2004. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Fitness for duty chapter.

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, p 63-64.

Decision rationale: The claimant sustained a work injury in October 2013 with a right ankle fracture/dislocation complicated by an infection. When seen, he was having minimal to no pain and had markedly improved. He was having intermitted wound breakdown and was having balance issues. He was working without restrictions. Physical examination findings included normal gait with normal range of motion and strength. A functional capacity evaluation is being requested for final impairment rating. A functional capacity evaluation is an option for select patients with chronic pain when a physician thinks the information might be helpful to attempt to objectify worker capability with respect to either a specific job or general job requirements. In this case, the claimant has returned to unrestricted work and a normal ankle examination is documented. Work restrictions are not being considered. Determination of impairment can be done based on physical examination findings. Obtaining a functional capacity evaluation is not medically necessary.