

Case Number:	CM15-0028024		
Date Assigned:	02/20/2015	Date of Injury:	03/03/2014
Decision Date:	04/02/2015	UR Denial Date:	02/12/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	02/13/2015

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: New York, Tennessee
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Emergency 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 50 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on 3/3/14. On 2/13/15, the injured worker submitted an application for IMR for review of Physical therapy, 3 times a week for 4 weeks to the right shoulder. The treating provider has reported the injured worker complained of headaches, neck pain, right shoulder pain, and low back pain. The diagnoses have included adhesive capsulitis shoulder. Somatic dysfunction upper extremity, sprain shoulder/arm NOC, sprain neck, osteoarthritis NOS- shoulder, chronic osteomyelitis - hand, primary osteoarthritis shoulder, sprain rotator cuff, superior glenoid labrum lesion, joint pain shoulder. Treatment to date has included physical therapy, chiropractic care, TENS unit, status post right shoulder surgery 7/30/14), x-rays pelvis (2/4/14), MRI right shoulder (11/11/14), MRI right knee (10/19/14). On 2/12/15 Utilization Review non-certified Physical therapy, 3 times a week for 4 weeks to the right shoulder. The MTUS Guidelines were cited.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Physical therapy, 3 times a week for 4 weeks to the right shoulder: 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) -

Treatment in Workers Compensation, 2015 web-based edition; California MTUS guidelines, web-based edition http://www.dir.ca.gov/t8/ch4_5sb1a5_5_2.html.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Pain Interventions and Guidelines Page(s): 98-99.

Decision rationale: Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines state that there is no high-grade scientific evidence to support the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of passive physical modalities such as traction, heat/cold applications, massage, diathermy, TENS units, ultrasound, laser treatment, or biofeedback. They can provide short-term relief during the early phases of treatment. Active treatment is associated with better outcomes and can be managed as a home exercise program with supervision. ODG states that physical therapy is more effective in short-term follow up. Patients should be formally assessed after a "six-visit clinical trial" to see if the patient is moving in a positive direction, no direction, or a negative direction (prior to continuing with the physical therapy). When treatment duration and/or number of visits exceed the guideline, exceptional factors should be noted. Recommended number of visits for myalgia and myositis is 9-10 visits over 8 weeks; and for neuralgia, neuritis, and radiculitis is 8-10 visits over 4 weeks. In this case the requested number of 12 visits surpasses the number of six recommended for clinical trial to determine functional improvement. The request should not be authorized.