

Case Number:	CM15-0067903		
Date Assigned:	04/15/2015	Date of Injury:	04/08/2008
Decision Date:	05/20/2015	UR Denial Date:	03/10/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	04/09/2015

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

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 4/8/08. The injured worker has complaints of right upper extremity pain carpel tunnel in the right wrist. The injured worker reports pain, tingling and numbness in the right upper extremity. The diagnoses have included chronic pain syndrome; hand joint hand and carpal tunnel syndrome. Treatment to date has included celebrex, neurontin and flexeril. The request was for physical therapy for the right hand.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Physical therapy for the right hand #8: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 11 Forearm, Wrist, and Hand Complaints, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines physical medicine Page(s): 98-99. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG)-forearm, wrist, and hand procedure summary pp283-286.

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

Decision rationale: The patient presents with pain affecting the right hand. The current request is for Physical Therapy for the right hand #8. The treating physician states, "She found PT helpful for carpal tunnel and requests PT sessions. She has not participated in PT in several years. I believe this service will benefit her medically and psychologically." (13B) The MTUS guidelines state, "They can be used sparingly with active therapies to help control swelling, pain and inflammation during the rehabilitation process" and MTUS only allows 8-10 sessions of physical therapy. In the records provided for review for this case, the treating physician has not documented how many prior physical therapy sessions the patient has completed and if the patient had any functional improvement with physical therapy. The physician has not documented any recent surgery, flare-up, new injury or new diagnosis that would require additional physical therapy and there is no discussion as to why the patient is not currently able to participate in a home exercise program. The current request is not medically necessary and the recommendation is for denial.