

Case Number:	CM15-0078427		
Date Assigned:	04/29/2015	Date of Injury:	09/12/2003
Decision Date:	06/01/2015	UR Denial Date:	04/06/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	04/23/2015

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: California, Arizona, Maryland
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Psychiatry

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 45 year old male who sustained an industrial injury on September 12, 2003. Prior treatment includes acupuncture therapy, cervical epidural injections and medications. Currently the injured worker complains of neck pain, right shoulder pain and right hand C7 paresthesias. Diagnoses associated with the request cervical degenerative disc disease, cervical radiculopathy, bicipital tendonitis and right shoulder pain. The treatment plan includes medications, laboratory evaluations, cognitive behavioral therapy, ice/heat therapy as needed and acupuncture therapy.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Cognitive behavioral therapy, 9 sessions: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 23. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Pain Chapter; ODG Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) guidelines for chronic pain.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Psychological treatment Page(s): 23, 100-102.

Decision rationale: California MTUS states that behavioral interventions are recommended. The identification and reinforcement of coping skills is often more useful in the treatment of pain than ongoing medication or therapy, which could lead to psychological or physical dependence. ODG Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) guidelines for chronic pain recommends screening for patients with risk factors for delayed recovery, including fear avoidance beliefs. Initial therapy for these "at risk" patients should be physical medicine for exercise instruction, using cognitive motivational approach to physical medicine. Consider separate psychotherapy CBT referral after 4 weeks if lack of progress from physical medicine alone: Initial trial of 3-4 psychotherapy visits over 2 weeks; With evidence of objective functional improvement, total of up to 6-10 visits over 5-6 weeks (individual sessions). Upon review of the submitted documentation, it is gathered that the injured worker suffers from chronic pain secondary to industrial trauma and would be a good candidate for behavioral treatment of chronic pain. However, the request for Cognitive behavioral therapy, 9 sessions, exceeds the guideline recommendations for an initial trial and thus is not medically necessary at this time.