

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0095405		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	05/22/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	08/04/2014
<b>Decision Date:</b>	09/03/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	04/23/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	05/18/2015

### 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: 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 52 year old male sustained an industrial injury on 8-04-14. He subsequently reported low back and buttock pain. Diagnoses include cervical spine sprain and strain with myofascitis, cervical spine, multilevel posterior disc bulge and lumbar spine spondylosis. Treatments to date include MRI testing, acupuncture and prescription pain medications. The injured worker continues to experience neck and low back pain. Upon examination of the cervical spine, there was tenderness to palpation over the midline spinous process centered at C7. The examination of the lumbar spine demonstrates tenderness to palpation over the midline at the lumbar spine junction. There is bilateral hamstring tightness. A request for Physical therapy to the lumbar spine was made by the treating physician.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Physical therapy to the lumbar spine:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Physical Medicine.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 98-99. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Low Back Chapter, Physical Medicine.

**Decision rationale:** Regarding the request for physical therapy, Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines recommend a short course (10 sessions) of active therapy with continuation of active therapies at home as an extension of the treatment process in order to maintain improvement levels. ODG has more specific criteria for the ongoing use of physical therapy. ODG recommends a trial of physical therapy. If the trial of physical therapy results in objective functional improvement, as well as ongoing objective treatment goals, then additional therapy may be considered. Within the documentation available for review, there is no documentation of specific objective functional improvement with any previous sessions and remaining deficits that cannot be addressed within the context of an independent home exercise program yet are expected to improve with formal supervised therapy. In light of the above issues, the currently requested physical therapy is not medically necessary.