

Case Number:	CM14-0110372		
Date Assigned:	08/01/2014	Date of Injury:	07/18/2013
Decision Date:	10/02/2014	UR Denial Date:	06/17/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	07/15/2014

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. The expert reviewer is Board Certified in Occupational Medicine and is licensed to practice in California. 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/services. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

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 applicant is a represented [REDACTED], who has filed a claim for migraine headaches reportedly associated with an industrial injury of July 18, 2013. In a Utilization Review Report dated June 17, 2014, the claims administrator conditionally denied a request for MRI imaging of the brain. No guidelines were cited. The applicant's attorney subsequently appealed. In a May 29, 2014, medical legal evaluation, the applicant reported highly variable migraine headaches, sometimes severe. The applicant stated that she would sometimes have issues with migraines headaches as frequently as thrice weekly, while, at other times, she would go as much as a month without migraines. The applicant also reported ancillary complaints of back pain, neck pain, and hip pain. The applicant last worked on March 7, 2014, it was stated. The applicant was not working, it was rated. The applicant was using Imitrex, Motrin, Omeprazole and topical pain creams. The medical legal evaluation suggested that the applicant return to work. The applicant was given 5% person whole person impairment rating. In a March 27, 2014, progress note, the applicant reported persistent complaints of headaches. The applicant was apparently using Prilosec, a topical compounded cream, and Motrin. Rather proscriptive 10-pound lifting limitation was endorsed. It was not clearly stated whether or not the applicant was working with said limitation in place. Reminder of the file was surveyed. There was no evidence that the applicant had had brain MRI imaging on file. In a psychiatric medical-legal evaluation dated April 18, 2014, the applicant was given a 3% whole person impairment rating from a mental health perspective. It was suggested that the applicant had alleged mental health issues secondary to cumulative trauma at work.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

MRI of the Brain without contrast: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation American Society of Neuroradiology (ASNR) Practice Guideline for the performance and interpretation of magnetic resonance imaging of the brain.

Decision rationale: The MTUS does not address the topic. As noted by the American Society of Neuroradiology (ASNR), indications for MRI imaging of the brain include evaluation of the headaches. In this case, the applicant does have longstanding issues with headaches. While these have been deemed migrainous in nature, the applicant's treating providers and medical legal evaluators have expressed some doubts as to whether other pathology may potentially be at play here. MRI imaging to delineate the extent of the same is therefore indicated. Accordingly, the request is medically necessary.