

Case Number:	CM14-0143294		
Date Assigned:	09/10/2014	Date of Injury:	12/16/1998
Decision Date:	08/21/2015	UR Denial Date:	08/20/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/03/2014

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. 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:

The injured worker is a 75-year-old female, who sustained an industrial injury on December 16, 1996. The injured worker was diagnosed as having lumbago. Treatment to date has included several spinal surgeries. A progress note dated June 25, 2014 provides the injured worker complains of right foot pain and right iliac crest pain radiating to right buttock and thigh. Neurological exam was unremarkable. The plan includes magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and physical therapy.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

1 physical therapy for the lower back (no frequency or duration specified): Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ACOEM- <https://www.acoempracguides.org/Low Back; Table 2, Summary of Recommendations, Low Back Disorders>.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints Page(s): 298, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines 8 C.C.R. 9792.20 9792.26 MTUS (Effective July 18, 2009) Page(s): 98 of 127. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Low Back Chapter, Physical Therapy.

Decision rationale: Regarding the request for physical therapy, Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines recommend a short course 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 indication of any specific objective treatment goals and no statement indicating why an independent program of home exercise would be insufficient to address any objective deficits. Furthermore, guidelines do not support open-ended requests for therapy and, unfortunately, there is no provision for modification of the current request. In the absence of such documentation, the current request for physical therapy is not medically necessary.