



Medical Review Institute of America, Inc.
America's External Review Network

DATE OF REVIEW: December 17, 2007

IRO Case #:

Description of the services in dispute:

(10) sessions work hardening program.

A description of the qualifications for each physician or other health care provider who reviewed the decision:

This review was provided by a Doctor of Chiropractic who is also a member of the American Chiropractic Academy of Neurology. This reviewer also holds a certification in Acupuncture. This reviewer has fulfilled both academic and clinical appointments and currently serves as an assistant professor at a state college, is in private practice and is a director of chiropractic services. This reviewer has previously served as a director, dean, instructor, assistant professor, and teaching assistant at a state college and was responsible for course studies consisting of pediatric and geriatric diagnosis, palpation, adjusting, physical therapy, case management, and chiropractic principles. This reviewer is responsible for multiple postgraduate seminars on various topics relating to chiropractics and has authored numerous publications. This reviewer has participated in numerous related professional activities including work groups, committees, consulting, national healthcare advisory committees, seminars, National Chiropractic Coalition, media appearances, and industrial consulting. This reviewer has been in practice since 1986.

Review Outcome:

Upon independent review the reviewer finds that the previous adverse determination/adverse determinations should be:

Upheld.

Provide a description of the review outcome that clearly states whether or not medical necessity exists for each of the health care services in dispute.

Information provided to the IRO for review:

Records from the State:

7 page confirmation of receipt for a request for a review by an IRO dated 11/26/07
3 page report from dated 10/10/07
3 page report from dated 10/31/07

Records from URA:

1 page fax cover sheet from Rehabilitation Center dated 10/5/07
3 page report from DC dated 10/5/07
3 page request for appeal from Rehabilitation Center dated 10/26/07
1 page Work Hardening Referral dated 9/18/07
14 page physical performance evaluation dated 8/13/07
6 page report from DO dated 4/20/07
1 page report from DO dated 7/17/07
1 page report from Dr. dated 8/27/07

ODG Guidelines were not provided for review

Records from Provider:

5 page report from Neurodiagnostics dated 8/20/07
4 page diagnostic interview and treatment plan from Healthcare dated 9/26/07
7 page physical performance evaluation from Healthcare dated 9/26/07

Patient clinical history [summary]:

The patient, a male , was injured on the job when he entrapped the distal end of his little finger in a cylinder machine press, causing a fracture of the distal phalanx and crush injury to the distal tip of the finger. He was evaluated by an orthopedic surgeon in July of 2007 and additional physical therapy was recommended. The patient underwent a physical performance evaluation at Rehabilitation Center on 8/13/07. The patient was functioning at the medium physical demand level per the test on 8/13/07. He was re-examined by the orthopedic surgeon on 8/27/07 and he was to return to full duty employment per the orthopedic surgeon's recommendation as of 9/15/07. A request for work hardening was submitted by the chiropractor on 10/5/07 at a frequency of 5 visits per week for 2 weeks (10 sessions at 8 hrs per day). The initial request was denied as not

medically necessary and a subsequent appeal was also denied.

Analysis and explanation of the decision include clinical basis, findings and conclusions used to support the decision:

1. Is the request for 10 sessions of work hardening program medically necessary?

The request for 10 sessions of work hardening program is not medically necessary in this case. The patient in this case has already undergone 24 sessions of physical therapy for his hand injury. The ODG Guidelines indicate that the patient requires a detailed job description from the employer. The job description has not been obtained to date. Secondly, patient's seeking entry into work hardening programs should have a defined return to work goal agreed upon by the employer and employee and a documented specific job to return to following program completion.

The patient in this case was examined by the orthopedic surgeon on 8/27/07 and he was to return to full duty employment per the orthopedic surgeon's recommendation as of 9/15/07. There was apparent attempt noted in the records reviewed to indicate that the patient attempted to comply with the directions given by his orthopedic surgeon. The ODG Guidelines indicate that patients with fractures of the phalanges require no more than 8 physical therapy visits over 5 weeks and for complicated post-surgical cases they may require up to 16 visits over 8 weeks. The physical therapy rendered in this case well-exceeded ODG Guideline recommendations. Furthermore, the ODG Guidelines do not recommend work hardening programs for hand injuries.

A description and the source of the screening criteria or other clinical basis used to make the decision:

ODG Guidelines