mcmc
managing care. managing claims.
88 Black Falcon Avenue, Suite 353 Boston, MA 02210 (T) 800-227-1464 (F) 617-375-7777

DATE OF REVIEW:
06/28/2007

IRO CASE #:

DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICE OR SERVICES IN DISPUTE
Bilateral L3-S1 facet median nerve block 64475 and 64476.

A DESCRIPTION OF THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR EACH PHYSICIAN OR OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDER WHO REVIEWED THE DECISION
Board Certified

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

Overturned (Disagree)

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.
Bilateral L3-S1 facet median nerve block 64475 and 64476 are medically necessary.

INFORMATION PROVIDED TO THE IRO FOR REVIEW
- MCMC: Case Report dated 06/19/07
- MCMC Referral dated 06/19/07
- Letter dated 06/19/07 from, IRO Coordinator
- Independent Review Organization Summary dated 06/19/07
- DWC: Notice to MCMC, LLC of Case Assignment dated 06/19/07 from
- DWC: Confirmation Of Receipt Of A Request For A Review dated 05/31/07
- LHL009: Request For A Review By An Independent Review Organization dated 05/29/07
- Letters dated 05/29/07, 05/15/07 from, M.D.
- Letters dated 05/22/07, 05/10/07
- DWC: Work Status Report dated 05/11/07, 03/27/07 and one with no date
- M.D.: Office/Outpatient Visit note dated 05/04/07
- Form notes dated 03/30/07, 03/27/07
- Physician Record dated 03/27/07
- Accident Report dated xx/xx/xx
- Radiology Reports dated xx/xx/xx, xx/xx/xx
- DWC Form 1: Employers First Report Of Injury Or Illness dated xx/xx/xx
- Instructions To Patients Concerning After Emergency Room Care dated xx/xx/xx
- Undated Pre-Authorization Request
- Undated memo
- Undated article entitled

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PATIENT CLINICAL HISTORY [SUMMARY]:
The injured individual is a female with date of injury xx/xx/xx. The injured individual has low back pain despite medications and physical therapy (PT). Physical Exam (PE) reveals positive Kemp's and Gaenslen's testing, and lumbar spasm. The attending physician (AP) is recommending lumbar median branch blocks.

ANALYSIS AND EXPLANATION OF THE DECISION INCLUDE CLINICAL BASIS, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS USED TO SUPPORT THE DECISION.
The injured individual is a female with date of injury xx/xx/xx. The injured individual has ongoing back pain and spasms without radicular or neurologic findings despite NSAIDs and PT. She has spasms in her low back along with positive Kemp's and Gaenslen's test bilaterally. The AP is requesting diagnostic median branch blocks to be done. Official Disability Guidelines state these are reasonable as a diagnostic tool. The injured individual has complaints and findings consistent with facet mediated pain making the injections reasonable.

A DESCRIPTION AND THE SOURCE OF THE SCREENING CRITERIA OR OTHER CLINICAL BASIS USED TO MAKE THE DECISION:
MEDICAL JUDGEMENT, CLINICAL EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ACCEPTED MEDICAL STANDARDS

ODG- OFFICIAL DISABILITY GUIDELINES & TREATMENT GUIDELINES
ODG 2007, which states: "Not recommended except as a diagnostic tool. Therapeutic facet blocks use a local anesthetic and are intended to have an on-going therapeutic effect as they numb the source of pain. There has been only one study that supports medial branch blocks in a therapeutic capacity. Patients either received a local anesthetic or a local anesthetic with methyl prednisolone. (Manchikanti, 2001) All blocks included Sarapin. Sixty percent of the patients overall underwent seven or more procedures over the 2 ½ year study period (8.4 ± 0.31 over 13 to 32 months). There were more procedures recorded for the group that received corticosteroids that those that did not (301 vs. 210, respectively). Based on this study, certain guidelines have suggested that medial branch blocks show moderate evidence for treatment of chronic lumbar spinal pain. (Boswell, 2005) [Moderate evidence is defined as "further research is likely to have an important impact on confidence of estimating the effect of treatment and likely to change the estimate," per Grade Working Group. (Atkins, 2004)] The use of the blocks for diagnostic purposes is discussed in Facet joint diagnostic blocks (injections). See also Facet joint intra-articular injections (therapeutic blocks)."