



Southwestern Forensic
Associates, Inc.

DATE OF REVIEW: 10/15/08

IRO CASE #:

DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICE OR SERVICES IN DISPUTE:

Twenty sessions of work hardening.

DESCRIPTION OF QUALIFICATIONS OF REVIEWER:

D.C. for sixteen years, currently practicing in the area of rehabilitative therapy.

REVIEW OUTCOME:

“Upon independent review, I find that the previous adverse determination or determinations should be (check only one):

Upheld (Agree)

Overturned (Disagree)

Partially Overturned (Agree in part/Disagree in part)

Medical necessity clearly exists for the requested service. This patient has a history of compliance and good voluntary effort with prior programs. He has a job to go back to for which he does not currently meet the PDL, according to his FCE. Psychological testing, BDI and BAI, indicate the need for psychological counseling. He has made improvements during prior levels of care that have not allowed him to fully return to the workplace.

INJURED EMPLOYEE CLINICAL HISTORY (Summary):

The injured employee was working in the scope of his job on a ladder approximately fourteen feet off the ground. He slipped and the ladder fell forward. He sustained a lip laceration, broken teeth, injuries including herniation and bulges to the lumbar and cervical spines, sprain elbows and bilateral knee meniscal tear. He had sutures to the lip, arthroscopic surgery to the bilateral knees, cervical and lumbar epidural steroid injections, 24 sessions of post surgical rehab. He has had an MRI scan and EMG studies to document his injuries. Work hardening is recommended by the orthopedic spinal surgeon.

ANALYSIS AND EXPLANATION OF THE DECISION, INCLUDING CLINICAL BASIS, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS USED TO SUPPORT DECISION:

The injured employee was injured during the course and scope of his job. Records indicate that he completed 24 sessions of post surgical rehab and made progress but was unable to meet the required PDL of heavy but was at a medium PDL. A past reviewer noted that there was no psychometric testing included for review, but a BAI and BDI-II score did indicate the need for psychologic intervention. A second Peer Reviewer indicated that the patient voluntarily terminated the lifting test, which is contrary to the information presented for review. The ODG Guidelines and Division of Workers' Compensation Policies and Guidelines state that suitable candidates for the program include persons who are likely to benefit from the program. This patient has progressed to a lifting capacity of 30 pounds, and his required lifting capacity is 50 pounds. He has a job to return to, and no modified duty is available. He should be afforded the opportunity to regain his formal PDL of heavy. His return to work goal is defined clearly as being able to reach his previous PDL of heavy. I believe, based on the ODG and DWC Policies and Guidelines, and my own clinical experience that this patient is a suitable candidate for twenty sessions of work hardening.

DESCRIPTION AND SOURCE OF THE SCREENING CRITERIA OR OTHER CLINICAL BASIS USED TO MAKE YOUR DECISION:

(Check any of the following that were used in the course of your review.)

- ACOEM-American College of Occupational & Environmental Medicine UM Knowledgebase.
- AHCPR-Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality Guidelines.
- DWC-Division of Workers' Compensation Policies or Guidelines.
- European Guidelines for Management of Chronic Low Back Pain.
- Interqual Criteria.
- Medical judgment, clinical experience and expertise in accordance with accepted medical standards.
- Mercy Center Consensus Conference Guidelines.
- Milliman Care Guidelines.
- ODG-Official Disability Guidelines & Treatment Guidelines.
- Pressley Reed, The Medical Disability Advisor.
- Texas Guidelines for Chiropractic Quality Assurance & Practice Parameters.
- Texas TACADA Guidelines.
- TMF Screening Criteria Manual.
- Peer reviewed national accepted medical literature (provide a description).
- Other evidence-based, scientifically valid, outcome-focused guidelines (provide a description.)