

SENT VIA EMAIL OR FAX ON  
Apr/20/2009

## Independent Resolutions Inc.

An Independent Review Organization  
835 E. Lamar Blvd. #394  
Arlington, TX 76011  
Phone: (817) 349-6420  
Fax: (817) 549-0311  
Email: rm@independentresolutions.com

**DATE OF REVIEW:**  
Apr/16/2009

**IRO CASE #:**

**DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICE OR SERVICES IN DISPUTE:**  
Work Conditioning 5 X 2 RUE

**DESCRIPTION OF THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR EACH PHYSICIAN OR OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDER WHO REVIEWED THE DECISION:**

Chiropractor  
AADEP Certified  
Whole Person Certified  
TWCC ADL Doctor  
Certified Electrodiagnostic Practitioner  
Member of the American of Clinical Neurophysiology  
Clinical practice 10+ years in Chiropractic WC WH Therapy

**REVIEW OUTCOME:**

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

- Upheld (Agree)  
 Overturned (Disagree)  
 Partially Overturned (Agree in part/Disagree in part)

**INFORMATION PROVIDED TO THE IRO FOR REVIEW**

**PATIENT CLINICAL HISTORY SUMMARY**

The injured employee was involved in an occupational injury on xx-xx-xx. The injured employee was working when she was splashed with hot tar. The injured employee sustained

2nd – 3rd degree burns to the right wrist. The injured employee was treated with medication, partial debridement, physical therapy, x-rays, MRI, EMG, and work hardening. The injured worker was terminated in 2007 and does not have a job to return to and has completed 10 sessions of work hardening. Ten (5x2) session of work conditioning are now being requested.

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

The injured worker does not meet the criteria for a work-conditioning program. The injured worker has completed 10-session of work hardening and upon completion of a work hardening program neither re-enrollment in nor repetition of the same or similar program is medically necessary. The injured worker is greater than 2 years post injury and workers that have not returned to work by two years post injury may not benefit from the program. The injured worker does not appear to have a defined return work goal agreed to by the employer, as was noted in documentation that the injured employee was terminated in 2007. Additionally, documentation submitted indicated that the injured worker started the 10- sessions of work hardening at sedentary PDL and completed at sedentary PDL.

Work conditioning, work hardening Recommended as an option, depending on the availability of quality programs, and should be specific for the job individual is going to return to. (2003) There is limited literature support for multidisciplinary treatment and work hardening for the neck, hip, knee, shoulder and forearm. (2003) Work Conditioning should restore the client's physical capacity and function. Work Hardening should be work simulation and not just therapeutic exercise, plus there should also be psychological support. Work Hardening is an interdisciplinary, individualized, job specific program of activity with the goal of return to work. Work Hardening programs use real or simulated work tasks and progressively graded conditioning exercises that are based on the individual's measured tolerances. (2006) (2006) The need for work hardening is less clear for workers in sedentary or light demand work, since on the job conditioning could be equally effective, and an examination should demonstrate a gap between the current level of functional capacity and an achievable level of required job demands. As with all intensive rehab programs, measurable functional improvement should occur after initial use of WH. It is not recommended that patients go from work conditioning to work hardening to chronic pain programs, repeating many of the same treatments without clear evidence of benefit. (2008)

#### Criteria for admission to a Work Hardening Program

- (1) Work related musculoskeletal condition with functional limitations precluding ability to safely achieve current job demands, which are in the medium or higher demand level (i.e., not clerical/sedentary work). An FCE may be required showing consistent results with maximal effort, demonstrating capacities below an employer verified physical demands analysis (PDA)
- (2) After treatment with an adequate trial of physical or occupational therapy with improvement followed by plateau, but not likely to benefit from continued physical or occupational therapy, or general conditioning
- (3) Not a candidate where surgery or other treatments would clearly be warranted to improve function
- (4) Physical and medical recovery sufficient to allow for progressive reactivation and participation for a minimum of 4 hours a day for three to five days a week
- (5) A defined return to work goal agreed to by the employer & employee
  - (a) A documented specific job to return to with job demands that exceed abilities, O

(b) Documented on-the-job training

(6) The worker must be able to benefit from the program (functional and psychological limitations that are likely to improve with the program). Approval of these programs should require a screening process that includes file review, interview and testing to determine likelihood of success in the program

(7) The worker must be no more than 2 years past date of injury. Workers that have not returned to work by two years post injury may not benefit

(8) Program timelines: Work Hardening Programs should be completed in 4 weeks consecutively or less

(9) Treatment is not supported for longer than 1-2 weeks without evidence of patient compliance and demonstrated significant gains as documented by subjective and objective gains and measurable improvement in functional abilities

(10) Upon completion of a rehabilitation program (e.g. work hardening, work conditioning, outpatient medical rehabilitation) neither re-enrollment in nor repetition of the same or similar rehabilitation program is medically warranted for the same condition or injury

ODG Physical Therapy Guidelines – Work Conditioning

12 visits over 8 week

See also Physical therapy for general PT guidelines.

**A DESCRIPTION AND THE SOURCE OF THE SCREENING CRITERIA OR OTHER CLINICAL BASIS USED TO MAKE THE DECISION**

ACOEM-AMERICA 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 JUDGEMENT, 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 ERVIEWED NATIONALLY ACCEPTED MEDICAL LITERATURE (PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION)

OTHER EVIDENCE BASED, SCIENTIFICALLY VALID, OUTCOME FOCUSED GUIDELINES  
(PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION)