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DATE OF REVIEW: 06/18/09

IRO CASE NO.:

DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICE OR SERVICES IN DISPUTE:

Item in dispute: Epidural steroid injection at L3-L4, L4-L5, and L5-S1.

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

Board Certified Orthopedic Surgeon

REVIEW OUTCOME

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

Denial Upheld

INFORMATION PROVIDED TO THE IRO FOR REVIEW

1. xx-xx-xx – Employer's First Report of Injury or Illness
2. 03/16/09 – 05/09/09 –Medical Center
3. 04/16/09 –Orthopedic Center
4. 04/22/09 – Imaging
5. 04/24/09 –Spine Center
6. 04/25/09 – Physical Performance Evaluation
7. 05/07/09 – 05/14/09 – Medical Business Management Services Denials
8. 05/08/09 –Health Care
9. 06/03/09 – Occupational Health Systems Peer Review
10. 06/04/09 –M.D.
11. **Official Disability Guidelines**

PATIENT CLINICAL HISTORY (SUMMARY):

The employee was injured while lifting and began experiencing back pain, as well as right leg pain. The specific MRI report was not provided. However, a quotation from Dr. indicated there was multilevel degenerative change with both congenital and degenerative spinal stenosis. There were no obvious acute findings. The employee was neurologically intact when first examined at Orthopedic Center on 04/16/09. He had symmetrical reflexes, strength, and sensation, with negative straight leg raising.

On 04/24/09, Dr. noted symmetrical reflexes, strength, and sensation of the bilateral lower extremities, with positive straight leg raising on the right. There was no mention of the particular pain that was elicited with straight leg raising.

ANALYSIS AND EXPLANATION OF THE DECISION INCLUDE CLINICAL BASIS, FINDINGS, AND CONCLUSIONS USED TO SUPPORT THE DECISION.

Official Disability Guidelines recommend epidural steroid injections in the presence of objective findings documenting radiculopathy. The documentation needs to be unequivocal for objective findings of radiculopathy. There was no notation in these records that the employee has received any conservative care with physical therapy, home exercise, or medications other than analgesics. There are no indications for epidural steroid injections present in this documentation, according to recommendations of the **Official Disability Guidelines**.

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

1. **Official Disability Guidelines**