Advanced Medical Reviews

ACCREDITED EXTERNAL REVIEW

Notice of Independent Review Decision

PEER REVIEWER FINAL REPORT

DATE OF REVIEW: 6/30/2009
IRO CASE #:

DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICE OR SERVICES IN DISPUTE:
Bilateral L4-5 and L5-S1 Fact Joint Steroid Injection

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE REVIEWER:
This reviewer graduated from and completed training in Orthopaedics at. A physicians credentialing verification organization verified the state licenses, board certification and OIG records. This reviewer successfully completed Medical Reviews training by an independent medical review organization. This reviewer has been practicing Orthopaedics since 7/11/2004 and currently resides in.

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

X Upheld (Agree)

Overturned (Disagree)

Partially Overturned (Agree in part/Disagree in part)

Bilateral L4-5 and L5-S1 Fact Joint Steroid Injection Upheld

INFORMATION PROVIDED TO THE IRO FOR REVIEW

INJURED EMPLOYEE CLINICAL HISTORY [SUMMARY]:
The injured employee is a male who presents with mechanic low back pain and lumbar facet syndrome. The injured worker has significant pain primarily in the low back, but also down into the lateral aspect of his leg. The provider requested facet steroid injection.

Name: Patient_Name

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

The claimant is a male with a work-related low back injury in xxxx. He has undergone numerous interventions including:

-Chronic pain management
-Prior facet injections
-Facet denervation and Rhizotomy, which provided good relief (Rhizotomy on two occasions per the records)
-Physical therapy

Currently, his pain is increasing with some complaints of radicular symptoms. His physical exam is significant for tenderness over facet joints in exam by pain specialist. There is normal motor and sensation, and reflexes are also normal. MRI was completed on 4/13/2009 and compared to a previous MRI. It does demonstrate degenerative changes, but is essentially unchanged.

There are no indications for the request and the claimant does not meet the ODG criteria. He has had injections in past and 2 rhizotomies. Clinical exam does not support the need. MRI is essentially unchanged, indicating no new pathology. The claimant also has radicular symptoms. With regards to facet intraarticular blocks, there is no documentation of having at least 6 weeks of relief, nor is there any evidence of a formal plan of additional evidence-based activity and exercise in addition to the facet joint injection therapy.

The request for bilateral facet joint injections is not medically necessary based on the ODG guidelines and therefore the previous denial is upheld.

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

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 JUDGEMENT, CLINICAL EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ACCEPTED MEDICAL STANDARDS
MERCY CENTER CONSENSUS CONFERENCE GUIDELINES
MILLIMAN CARE GUIDELINES
X 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
X PEER REVIEWED NATIONALLY ACCEPTED MEDICAL LITERATURE (PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION)
OTHER EVIDENCE BASED, SCIENTIFICALLY VALID, OUTCOME FOCUSED GUIDELINES (PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION)

Boswell MV, Colson JD, Sehgal N, Dunbar EE, Epter R.A systematic review of therapeutic facet joint interventions in chronic spinal pain. Pain Physician. 2007 Jan;10(1):229-53.

Bani A, Spetzger U, Gilsbach JM.Indications for and benefits of lumbar facet joint block: analysis of 230 consecutive patients. Neurosurg Focus. 2002 Aug 15;13(2):E11.

Manchikanti L, Manchikanti KN, Manchukonda R, Cash KA, Damron KS, Pampati V, McManus CD.Evaluation of lumbar facet joint nerve blocks in the management of chronic low back pain: preliminary report of a randomized, double-blind controlled trial: clinical trial NCT00355914. Pain Physician. 2007 May;10(3):425-40