

# C-IRO Inc.

An Independent Review Organization  
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## NOTICE OF INDEPENDENT REVIEW DECISION

**DATE OF REVIEW:**

Jun/08/2010

**IRO CASE #:**

**DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICE OR SERVICES IN DISPUTE:**

Office visit 99213

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

MD, Board Certified in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation  
Subspecialty Board Certified in Pain Management  
Subspecialty Board Certified in Electrodiagnostic Medicine  
Residency Training PMR and ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY

**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**

ODG Guidelines

Adverse Determination Letters, 4/26/10, 5/4/10

Back Institute 10/13/09

Orthopedic Group 1/7/10

Rehab Associates 1/28/10, 3/17/10, 4/14/10

Texas Health 2/3/10, 7/2008

M.D. 1/7/10, 9/1/09, 3/2/08

M.D. 3/5/09, 12/13/07

**PATIENT CLINICAL HISTORY SUMMARY**

This woman was injured in xx/xx and underwent cervical and lumbar fusions in 2007. She has a foot drop from a peroneal nerve injury. She is being followed in a pain clinic. The records from several doctors state that she is not a surgical candidate.

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

There is a request to consider an office visit coded 99213. The patient saw Dr. on 10/13/09. Dr. wrote that this was an initial office visit as the patient was searching for a "cure." The code in question in this review is 99213, for a follow-up visit. At the initial office visit, Dr. did an

appropriate work up. He saw the patient and reached a conclusion that he could not offer her a cure. No follow-up visit is medically necessary. The reviewer finds that medical necessity does not exist for Office visit 99213.

Office visit

Recommended as determined to be medically necessary. Evaluation and management (E&M) outpatient visits to the offices of medical doctor(s) play a critical role in the proper diagnosis and return to function of an injured worker, and they should be encouraged. The need for a clinical office visit with a health care provider is individualized based upon a review of the patient concerns, signs and symptoms, clinical stability, and reasonable physician judgment. The determination is also based on what medications the patient is taking, since some medicines such as opiates, or medicines such as certain antibiotics, require close monitoring. As patient conditions are extremely varied, a set number of office visits per condition cannot be reasonably established. The determination of necessity for an office visit requires individualized case review and assessment, being ever mindful that the best patient outcomes are achieved with eventual patient independence from the health care system through self care as soon as clinically feasible. The ODG Codes for Automated Approval (CAA), designed to automate claims management decision-making, indicates the number of E&M office visits (codes 99201-99285) reflecting the typical number of E&M encounters for a diagnosis, but this is not intended to limit or cap the number of E&M encounters that are medically necessary for a particular patient. Office visits that exceed the number of office visits listed in the CAA may serve as a "flag" to payors for possible evaluation, however, payors should not automatically deny payment for these if preauthorization has not been obtained. Note: The high quality medical studies required for treatment guidelines such as ODG provides guidance about specific treatments and diagnostic procedures, but not about the recommended number of E&M office visits. Studies have and are being conducted as to the value of "virtual visits" compared with inpatient visits, however the value of patient/doctor interventions has not been questioned. (Dixon, 2008) (Wallace, 2004) Further, ODG does provide guidance for therapeutic office visits not included among the E&M codes, for example Chiropractic manipulation and Physical/Occupational therapy

99203 Doctor's office visit for the evaluation of a new patient for detailed history, examination, and medical decision of low complexity

Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of a new patient, which requires these three key components: A detailed history; A detailed examination; Medical decision making of low complexity. Counseling and/or coordination of care with other providers or agencies are provided consistent with the nature of the problem(s) and the patient's and/or family's needs. Usually, the presenting problem(s) are of moderate severity. Physicians typically spend 30 minutes face-to-face with the patient and/or family.

99213 Doctor's visit for the evaluation of an established patient for expanded examination and history of a problem requiring a fairly simple medical decision

Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of an established patient, which requires at least two of these three key components: An expanded problem focused history; An expanded problem focused examination; Medical decision making of low complexity. Counseling and coordination of care with other providers or agencies are provided consistent with the nature of the problem(s) and the patient's and/or family's needs. Usually, the presenting problem(s) are of low to moderate severity. Physicians typically spend 15 minutes face-to-face with the patient and/or family.

**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 REVIEWED NATIONALLY ACCEPTED MEDICAL LITERATURE (PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION)

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