



CLAIMS EVAL

*Utilization Review and
Peer Review Services*

Notice of Independent Review Decision-WC

DATE OF REVIEW: 11-8-10

IRO CASE #:

DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICE OR SERVICES IN DISPUTE

2 weeks 10 days of additional chronic pain management program

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

Chiropractor

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)

Provide a description of the review outcome that clearly states whether or not medical necessity exists for each of the health care services in dispute.

INFORMATION PROVIDED TO THE IRO FOR REVIEW

- 8-18-10 Functional Improvement Measure.
- 8-23-10 PhD., provided a request for 10 additional sessions of interdisciplinary pain management.
- 9-2-10 DC., performed a Utilization Review.
- 9-14-10 PhD., provided a reconsideration of services.
- 9-27-10 DC., Performed a Utilization Review.

PATIENT CLINICAL HISTORY [SUMMARY]:

8-18-10 Functional Improvement Measure notes the claimant is functioning at a Light PDL.

8-23-10 PhD., provided a request for 10 additional sessions of interdisciplinary pain management. He noted the claimant is a male who was referred for treatment by Dr.. He reported that he was injured in a work related accident on the above date. He was working at as a xx at the time of his injury. According to the claimant, in the course of his day to day work duties, he was positioning a load cradle onto a large load when a crane operator made a "bad maneuver" and shifted the load in his direction. The claimant reported that he was pinned in between the heavy load and a tarp support for several minutes. Since his injury, he has been treated with 5 sessions of physical therapy. His diagnoses are cervicgia, pain in thoracic spine, lumbalgia and pain in extremities. Currently, he is taking Vicodin ES 1 tab every 4 hours PRN, Soma 350 mg t.i.d., and Naproxen 500 mg b.i.d. He reported having pain related nervousness, agitation and headaches. He stated that since his accident, he has been having difficulty remembering things and responding to people when they speak to him. It should be noted that during the evaluation, his responses were delayed. He stated that the large load had hit his face. He may have sustained a head injury from the impact. He is currently pending a lumbar MRI, cervical MRI and CT scan of the head. The claimant reported that he has reduced his physical activities since the accident due to the pain which has resulted in general de-conditioning. He reported having difficulty with activities such as sitting for prolonged periods of time and lifting. He has appetite disturbance as well as initial and intermittent sleep disturbance. The claimant indicated that his appetite fluctuates and he has gained 10 lbs. since his injury. Currently, he weighs 210 lbs. and he is 5 ft. and 10 in. tall. He nets a total of 7 hours of sleep per 24 hour period due to initial and intermittent sleep disturbance. According to the claimant,

he does not feel rested after he sleeps and feels tired throughout the day. He reported that his pain is continuous and worsens with any activity. At its best his pain is 4 out of 10. At its worst his pain is 7 out of 10. On average his pain level is 5 out of 10. At the time of his previous re-evaluation, the claimant was netting a total of 6-7 hours of sleep per 24 hour period due to initial and intermittent sleep disturbance. He reported that he still did not have a job to go back to at this time. His pain levels are Best: 6 out of 10, Worst: 7 out of 10, Average: 6 out of 10. He is currently taking Vicodin ES 1 tab every 4 hours PRN, Soma 350 mg tid, and Naproxen 500 mg b.i.d. At this time, the client has completed 10 sessions in an interdisciplinary pain management program with favorable results. He was compliant, alert and completed all required program tasks. He socialized well with his peers and was able to decrease symptoms of depression, anxiety, pain and fear avoidance regarding engagement in work activities, when compared to his last re-evaluation scores, demonstrating improvement since he began participation in the program. His current pain levels are as follows: Best: 6, Average: 7 and Worst: 7. The evaluator reported that based on his above scores and pain levels, it is my opinion that the claimant would benefit from continued treatment in an interdisciplinary pain management program. Such programs have been found to aid in the reduction of symptoms of depression and anxiety, reduction in pain levels, reduction in medication usage, and increase in leisure and work activities.

9-2-10, DC., performed a Utilization Review. Based on review of all submitted documentation the current request for 10 additional sessions of chronic pain management program is not established as medically necessary. The request stated that pre program BDI was 41, BM was 52, and PDL was light. Pain was rated 5/10 (avg.) and sleep was 6 - 7 hours. Post 10 sessions, BDI was 34, BAI was 15, PDL was still light. Per treatment note dated 08/23/2010 pain was rated 7/10 (avg.) and 6 - 7 hours of sleep. There was no evidence of medication usage reduction. Program goals are for Heavy PDLs, pain score of 3/10, and continued reductions in medication and psychometric scores. There are noted improvements in psychometric scores. Functional capabilities have demonstrated scant evidence of improvement with PDL unchanged at "Light". Pain scores have worsened from an average of 5/10 to 7/10. Sleep and medication are essentially unchanged. ODG for Pain Regarding Chronic pain programs (functional restoration programs) states per criterion (10) "Treatment is not suggested for longer than 2 weeks without evidence of compliance and significant demonstrated efficacy as documented by subjective and objective gains. (Note: Patients may get worse before they get better. For example, objective gains may be moving joints that are stiff from lack of use, resulting in increased subjective pain.) However, it is also not suggested that a continuous course of treatment be interrupted at two weeks solely to document these gains, if there are preliminary indications that they are being made on a concurrent basis". The review program documentation strongly suggests that the patient is not on course to meet program goals and has conflicting evidence of progress. Therefore, Criterion (10) is not satisfied.

9-14-10 PhD., provided a reconsideration of services. He noted that this letter is to specifically request reconsideration for 10 additional sessions in an interdisciplinary pain management program. The patient was denied for additional sessions with the

rationale, "The request stated that pre program BDI was 41, BAI was 52, and PDL was light. Pain was rated 5/10 (avg.) and sleep was 6-7 hours. Post 10 sessions, BDI was 34, BAI was 15, PDL was still light. Per treatment note dated 08/23/2010 pain was rated 7/10 (avg.) and 6-7 hours of sleep. There was no evidence of medication usage reduction. Program goals are for Heavy PDLs, pain score of 3/10, and continued reductions in medication and psychometric scores. There are noted improvements in psychometric scores. Functional capabilities have demonstrated scant evidence of improvement with PDL unchanged at "Light". Pain scores have worsened from an average of 5/10 to 7/10. Sleep and medication are essentially unchanged. ODG...The review program documentation strongly suggest that the patient is not on course to meet program goals and has conflicting evidence of progress." During his participation in the interdisciplinary pain management program, the claimant was compliant, an active learner and fully engaged in all program activities, including physical exercises and group therapy discussions. He was able to demonstrate objective and subjective gains in both his functional restoration and in his psychological well-being, sufficient to warrant additional treatment sessions per ODG. These gains are documented in his Psychological Diagnostic Interview and in his Industrial Rehabilitation Comprehensive Care Plan. These medical records have been re-attached to this report for your review. To address "The request stated that pre program BDI was 41, BAT was 52, and PDL was light. Pain was rated 5/10 (avg.) and sleep was 6-7 hours. Post 10 sessions, BDI was 34, BAI was 15, PDL was still light. Per treatment note dated 08/23/2010 pain was rated 7/10 (avg) and 6-7 hours of sleep", these results do in fact demonstrate progress the client has been able to make His BDI score decreased from a 41 to a 34 and his BAI score decreased from a 52 to a 15, these are significant improvements in the client's well-being. The coping skills he learned in the program helped him alleviate both depression and anxiety symptoms for improved mood and disposition. Although the amount of sleep the client receives remains between 6-7 hours of sleep, the client reports feeling satisfied and comfortable with the amount of sleep he is receiving as he is now feeling more refreshed and rested upon waking up since participating in the program. This can be seen as progress since the client reports feeling a more improved quality of sleep, regardless of the amount of hours he is receiving. Lastly, although the client's PDL remains at a "Light" demand level, he has made improvements in his physical status. The claimant experienced de-conditioning since the accident as he greatly reduced his levels of physical activity. Since participating in the program, he has greatly increased his participation in physical activities and exercise. Due to this increase in activity, is normal and expected for pain symptoms to increase in the beginning as his body is no longer used to that level of activity. According to ODG, "Patients may get worse before they get better.", as is certainly the case with the claimant. As the client continues to engage in physical therapy exercises and pain management techniques, these pain symptoms should plateau and begin to decrease. This is the reason why additional sessions are necessary, so that the client has every opportunity to continue to make strides in his recovery. In regards to, "There was no evidence of medication usage reduction", the claimant continues to take his medication as prescribed by his treating physician. During his participation in the program, he participated in group therapy discussions on a daily basis. Some of those discussions focused on psychoeducational information regarding medication management, including

rationale for why certain medications are prescribed, implications for management of multiple medications, implications of abrupt discontinuation, indications and contraindications, side effects and storage. The claimant met with the Pain Team Physician during his participation in the program to evaluate and determine medication needs such as prescription, frequency, dosage, discontinuation and titration. A medication titration plan has been established, however, additional treatment sessions are warranted in order to reduce his medication needs as ten sessions do not provide adequate time to titrate medication in an effective, safe manner. The claimant's medication titration plan can be found beginning on Page 14 of this report under the section titled, "Rehabilitation Goals/Discharge Criteria", however, additional treatment sessions are essential to his recovery so that his dependence on the medication for pain management may be decreased. Lastly, the denial states, "Program goals are for Heavy PDLs, pain score of 3/10, and continued reductions in medication and psychometric scores. There are noted improvements in psychometric scores. Functional capabilities have demonstrated scant evidence of improvement with PDL unchanged at "Light". Pain scores have worsened from an average of 5/10 to 7/10. Sleep and medication are essentially unchanged" The client has made improvements in his psychological scores, but has also made improvements in his functional status. As reported in his Psychological Diagnostic Interview, he was able to "increase engagement in physical activities and exercise. He has also been able to increase his cardiovascular endurance, increase the amount of time he can stand/walk and he has increased his lifting/carrying physical demand level, all evidence of the benefits the program has provided for him". Although he may not have significantly met his goals, he has made steps in that direction. When the client began the program, he was pain focused and had physical limitations due to his pain and de-conditioning, which may have initially interfered with his progress in treatment. Additional treatment sessions are necessary so that he can fully take advantage of the physical therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy offered in the program, now that he has a better understanding of his capabilities. The claimant continues to be an appropriate candidate per ODG, meeting all required criteria, as documented beginning on page 9 of the attached Psychological Diagnostic Interview report, and he has demonstrated that he can make progress in his recovery, however additional treatment sessions are essential so that he can reach his full potential and be successful in his recovery and in his return to work endeavors. These sessions are crucial to his recovery as the program provides a structured environment where he can receive feedback, support and socialization and where he is taught the coping skills, pain management techniques and relaxation skills he needs. Additional sessions are needed to solidify gains already made in his trial sessions. To negate these services would be causing a disservice to the claimant.

9-27-10 DC., Performed a Utilization Review. The claimant is not a candidate for an additional trial of ten sessions of chronic pain management. Efficacy for the 10 additional sessions has not been provided in a quantitative/qualitative manner. The complete trial of care as purposed by the provider is not medically necessary. It is evident that the claimant has had some degree of improvement over the past 10 sessions. However, the request for 10 days of additional chronic pain management program is not medically necessary. References Used in Support of Decision: ODG

Treatment Integrated Treatment/Disability Duration Guidelines Pain (Chronic) Sanders SH, Harden RN, Vicente PJ. Evidence-Based Clinical Practice Guidelines for Interdisciplinary Rehabilitation of Chronic Nonmalignant Pain Syndrome Patients. World Institute of Pain, Pain Practice, Volume 5, Issue 4, 2005 303315.

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

REVIEW OF FILE SHOWS CLAIMANT HAS ATTENDED 10 SESSIONS OF A CHRONIC PAIN MANAGEMENT PROGRAM WITH LIMITED BENEFIT, AND PROVIDER RECOMMENDS AN ADDITIONAL 10 SESSIONS. CHRONIC PAIN MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS ARE INTENDED FOR PATIENTS WHO HAVE HAD A DELAYED RECOVERY AND DEMONSTRATE MOTIVATION TO IMPROVE AND RETURN TO WORK. THE INITIAL SESSIONS ARE ALSO INTENDED AS A TRIAL AND A CLAIMANT IS EXPECTED TO DEMONSTRATE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN BOTH PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOSOCIAL MEASUREMENTS BY OBJECTIVE FINDINGS IN ORDER TO SUPPORT CONTINUED TREATMENT. THESE MEASURES ARE SEEN AS PREDICTIVE OF SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF RETURN-TO-WORK AND FUNCTION.

IN THIS CASE, THE EVIDENCE PRESENTED SHOWS THE CLAIMANT HAS MADE GENERALLY MILD GAINS (AND IN ONE TEST, MODERATE) WITH REGARD TO PSYCHOLOGICAL MEASUREMENTS, BUT HAS REMAINED STATIONARY OR REGRESSED IN NEARLY ALL PHYSICAL TESTING. THE PHYSICAL DEMAND LEVEL GOAL IS HEAVY, WHILE THE CLAIMANT BOTH BEGAN AND ENDED THE 10-DAY PROGRAM AS LIGHT. BASED ON THE CPMP GUIDELINES, THE TRAJECTORY OF THIS CLAIMANT'S RECOVERY DOES NOT PREDICT A SUCCESSFUL RETURN TO WORK, NOR DO THE OUTCOME MEASUREMENTS OF THE TRIAL PERIOD SUPPORT ADDITIONAL SESSIONS AS MEDICALLY REASONABLE.

ODG-TWC, last update 11-8-10 Occupational Disorders of Pain – Chronic Pain Management Program: Recommended where there is access to programs with proven successful outcomes (i.e., decreased pain and medication use, improved function and return to work, decreased utilization of the health care system), for patients with conditions that have resulted in "Delayed recovery." There should be evidence that a complete diagnostic assessment has been made, with a detailed treatment plan of how to address physiologic, psychological and sociologic components that are considered components of the patient's pain. Patients should show evidence of motivation to improve and return to work, and meet the patient selection criteria outlined below. While these programs are recommended (see criteria below), the research remains ongoing as to (1) what is considered the "gold-standard" content for treatment; (2) the group of patients that benefit most from this treatment; (3) the ideal timing of when to initiate treatment; (4) the intensity necessary for effective treatment; and (5) cost-effectiveness. It has been suggested that interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary care models for treatment of chronic pain may be the most effective way to treat this

condition. (Flor, 1992) (Gallagher, 1999) (Guzman, 2001) (Gross, 2005) (Sullivan, 2005) (Dysvik, 2005) (Airaksinen, 2006) (Schonstein, 2003) (Sanders, 2005) (Patrick, 2004) (Buchner, 2006) These treatment modalities are based on the biopsychosocial model, one that views pain and disability in terms of the interaction between physiological, psychological and social factors. (Gatchel, 2005) See Biopsychosocial model of chronic pain.

Types of programs: There is no one universal definition of what comprises interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary treatment. These pain rehabilitation programs (as described below) combine multiple treatments, and at the least, include psychological care along with physical and/or occupational therapy (including an active exercise component as opposed to passive modalities). The most commonly referenced programs have been defined in the following general ways (Stanos, 2006):

(1) Multidisciplinary programs: Involves one or two specialists directing the services of a number of team members, with these specialists often having independent goals. These programs can be further subdivided into four levels of pain programs:

(a) Multidisciplinary pain centers (generally associated with academic centers and include research as part of their focus)

(b) Multidisciplinary pain clinics

(c) Pain clinics

(d) Modality-oriented clinics

(2) Interdisciplinary pain programs: Involves a team approach that is outcome focused and coordinated and offers goal-oriented interdisciplinary services. Communication on a minimum of a weekly basis is emphasized. The most intensive of these programs is referred to as a Functional Restoration Program, with a major emphasis on maximizing function versus minimizing pain. See Functional restoration programs.

Types of treatment: Components suggested for interdisciplinary care include the following services delivered in an integrated fashion: (a) physical treatment; (b) medical care and supervision; (c) psychological and behavioral care; (d) psychosocial care; (e) vocational rehabilitation and training; and (f) education.

Outcomes measured: Studies have generally evaluated variables such as pain relief, function and return to work. More recent research has begun to investigate the role of comorbid psychiatric and substance abuse problems in relation to treatment with pain programs. Recent literature has begun to suggest that an outcome of chronic pain programs may be to "demedicalize" treatment of a patient, and encourage them to take a more active role in their recovery. These studies use outcomes such as use of the medical care system post-treatment. The role of the increasing use of opioids and other medications (using data collected over the past decade) on outcomes of functional restoration is in the early stages, and it is not clear how changes in medication management have affected outcomes, if at all. (See Opioids for chronic pain.)

Outcomes (in terms of body parts)

Neck and Shoulder: There are limited studies about the efficacy of chronic pain programs for neck, shoulder, or upper extremity musculoskeletal disorders.

(Karjalainen, 2003) This may be because rates of cervical claims are only 20-25% of the rates of lumbar claims. In addition, little is known as to chronicity of outcomes.

Researchers using PRIDE Program (Progressive Rehabilitation Institute of Dallas for Ergonomics) data compared a cohort of patients with cervical spine disorders to those with lumbar spine disorders from 1990-1995 and found that they had similar outcomes. Cervical patients were statistically less likely to have undergone pre-rehabilitative surgery. (Wright, 1999)

Multidisciplinary back training: (involvement of psychologists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and/or medical specialists). The training program is partly based on physical training and partly on behavioral cognitive training. Physical training is performed according to the "graded activity" principle. The main goal is to restore daily function. A recent review of randomized controlled studies of at least a year's duration found that this treatment modality produced a positive effect on work participation and possibly on quality of life. There was no long-term effect on experienced pain or functional status (this result may be secondary to the instrument used for outcome measure). Intensity of training had no substantial influence on the effectiveness of the treatment. (van Geen, 2007) (Bendix, 1997) (Bendix, 1998) (Bendix2, 1998) (Bendix, 2000) (Frost, 1998) (Harkapaa, 1990) (Skouen, 2002) (Mellin, 1990) (Haldorsen, 2002)

Intensive multidisciplinary rehabilitation of chronic low back pain: The most recent Cochrane study was withdrawn from the Cochrane (3/06) as the last literature search was performed in 1998. Studies selected included a physical dimension treatment and at least one other treatment dimension (psychological, social, or occupational). Back schools were not included unless they included the above criteria. There was strong evidence that intensive multidisciplinary biopsychosocial rehabilitation with functional restoration improved function when compared to inpatient or outpatient nonmultidisciplinary rehabilitation. Intensive (> 100 hours), daily interdisciplinary rehabilitation was moderately superior to noninterdisciplinary rehabilitation or usual care for short- and long-term functional status (standardized mean differences, -0.40 to -0.90 at 3 to 4 months, and -0.56 to -1.07 at 60 months). There was moderate evidence of pain reduction. There was contradictory evidence regarding vocational outcome. Less intensive programs did not show improvements in pain, function, or vocational outcomes. It was suggested that patients should not be referred to multidisciplinary biopsychosocial rehabilitation without knowing the actual content of the program. (Guzman, 2001) (Guzman-Cochrane, 2002) (van Geen, 2007) (Bendix, 1997) (Bendix, 1998) (Bendix2, 1998) (Bendix, 2000) (Frost, 1998) (Harkapaa, 1990) (Skouen, 2002) (Mellin, 1990) (Haldorsen, 2002)

Multidisciplinary biopsychosocial rehabilitation for subacute low back pain among working age adults: The programs described had to include a physical component plus either a psychological, social and/or vocational intervention. There was moderate evidence of positive effectiveness for multidisciplinary rehabilitation for subacute low back pain and that a workplace visit increases effectiveness. The trials included had methodological shortcomings, and further research was suggested. (Karjalainen, 2003)

Role of opioid use: See Chronic pain programs, opioids.

Role of comorbid psych illness: Comorbid conditions, including psychopathology, should be recognized as they can affect the course of chronic pain treatment. In a

recent analysis, patients with panic disorder, antisocial personality disorder and dependent personality disorder were > 2 times more likely to not complete an interdisciplinary program. Personality disorders in particular appear to hamper the ability to successfully complete treatment. Patients diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder were 4.2 times more likely to have additional surgeries to the original site of injury. (Dersh, 2007) The prevalence of depression and anxiety in patients with chronic pain is similar. Cohort studies indicate that the added morbidity of depression and anxiety with chronic pain is more strongly associated with severe pain and greater disability. (Poleshuck, 2009) (Bair, 2008)

Predictors of success and failure: As noted, one of the criticisms of interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary rehabilitation programs is the lack of an appropriate screening tool to help to determine who will most benefit from this treatment. Retrospective research has examined decreased rates of completion of functional restoration programs, and there is ongoing research to evaluate screening tools prior to entry. (Gatchel, 2006) There is need for research in terms of necessity and/or effectiveness of counseling for patients considered to be "at-risk" for post-discharge problems. (Proctor, 2004) The following variables have been found to be negative predictors of efficacy of treatment with the programs as well as negative predictors of completion of the programs: (1) a negative relationship with the employer/supervisor; (2) poor work adjustment and satisfaction; (3) a negative outlook about future employment; (4) high levels of psychosocial distress (higher pretreatment levels of depression, pain and disability); (5) involvement in financial disability disputes; (6) greater rates of smoking; (7) increased duration of pre-referral disability time; (8) higher prevalence of opioid use; and (9) elevated pre-treatment levels of pain. (Linton, 2001) (Bendix, 1998) (McGeary, 2006) (McGeary, 2004) (Gatchel2, 2005) (Dersh, 2007)

Role of duration of disability: There is little research as to the success of return to work with functional restoration programs in long-term disabled patients (> 24 months).

Studies supporting programs for patients with long-term disability: Long-term disabled patients (at least 18 months) vs. short-term disabled (4 to 8 months) were evaluated using Pride data (1990-1993). No control was given for patients that did not undergo a program. During the time studied program dropouts averaged 8% to 12%. (It does appear that at the time of this study, participants in the program were detoxified from opioids prior to beginning.) The long-term disabled group was more likely to have undergone spinal surgery, with this likelihood increasing with time. Return to work was statistically different between the short-term disabled (93%) and the long-term disabled-18 months (80%). The long-term disabled-24 months group had a 75% return to work. Long-term disabled-18 month patients were statistically more likely to visit new health providers than short-term disabled patients (34% and 25% respectively). Work retention at one year in groups up to 24 months duration of disability was 80%. This dropped to 66% in the group that had been disabled for > 24 months. The percentage of recurrent lost time injury claims increased from around 1% in the groups disabled for < 35 months to 8.3% in the groups disabled for > 36 months. A main criterion for

success appeared to be the decision of the patient to actively participate in the program rehabilitation goals. (Jordan, 1998)

Studies suggesting limited results in patients with long-term disability: While early studies have suggested that time out-of-work is a predictor of success for occupational outcomes, these studies have flaws when an attempt is made to apply them to chronic pain programs. (Gallagher, 1989) (Beals, 1972) (Krause, 1994) Washington State studied the role of duration of work injury on outcome using a statistical model that allowed for a comparison of patients that participated in a multidisciplinary pain program (using data from 1991-1993) vs. those that were evaluated and not treated. This was not an actual study of time of disability, but of duration of injury (mean years from injury to evaluation of 2.6 years for the treated group and 4.0 years for the evaluated only group). The original statistical analysis allowed for a patient to be included in a "treated group" for those individuals that both completed and did not complete the program. Data was collected from 10 sites. Each of the centers was CARF approved and included Psych/behavioral treatment, vocation counseling and physical therapy. A sub-study evaluated a comparison of patients that were treatment completers vs. those that did not participate (78.6%, N=963). No information was given in terms of surgical procedures or medications. The primary outcome was time loss status of subjects 2 years after they had undergone the index pain center evaluation. In the 2001 study, if chronicity of duration of injury was controlled for, there was no significant benefit produced in terms of patients that were receiving time-loss benefits at 2-years post treatment between the two groups. Approximately 60% of both groups were not receiving benefits at the two-year period. As noted, the "treated patient" was only guaranteed to have started a program. A repeat analysis of only the patients who completed the study did not significantly change the results of the study. In a 2004 survey follow-up no significant difference was found between treated and untreated groups, although the treated group had better response. The survey response was 50%, and the treatment responders were more likely to be disabled at the time of the survey. The authors suggest that the results indicated early intervention was a key to response of the programs, and that modest goals (improvement, not cure) be introduced. (Robinson, 2004) (Robinson, 2001) [The authors also concluded that there was no evidence that pain center treatment affects either disability status or clinical status of injured workers.]

Timing of use: Intervention as early as 3 to 6 months post-injury may be recommended depending on identification of patients that may benefit from a multidisciplinary approach (from programs with documented positive outcomes). See Chronic pain programs, early intervention.

Role of post-treatment care (as an outcome): Three variables are usually examined; (1) New surgery at the involved anatomic site or area; (2) Percentage of patients seeking care from a new provider; (3) Number of visits to the new provider over and above visits with the health-care professional overseeing treatment. It is suggested that a "new provider" is more likely to reorder diagnostic tests, provide invasive procedures, and start long-term analgesics. In a study to determine the relationship between post-treatment healthcare-seeking behaviors and poorer outcomes

(using prospectively analyzed PRIDE data on patients with work-related musculoskeletal injuries), patients were compared that accessed healthcare with a new provider following functional restoration program completion (approximately 25%) to those that did not. The former group was significantly more likely to have an attorney involved with their case (22.7% vs. 17.1%, respectively), and to have had pre-rehabilitation surgery (20.7% vs. 12.1%, respectively). Return to work was higher in the group that did not access a new provider (90% vs. 77.6% in the group that did access). The group that did not access new providers also was more likely to be working at one year (88% vs. 62.2% in the group that accessed new providers). It should be noted that 18% of the patients that entered the program dropped out or were asked to leave. The authors suggested monitoring of additional access of healthcare over and above that suggested at the end of the program, with intervention if needed. (Proctor, 2004)

Criteria for the general use of multidisciplinary pain management programs:

Outpatient pain rehabilitation programs may be considered medically necessary in the following circumstances:

- (1) The patient has a chronic pain syndrome, with evidence of loss of function that persists beyond three months and has evidence of three or more of the following: (a) Excessive dependence on health-care providers, spouse, or family; (b) Secondary physical deconditioning due to disuse and/or fear-avoidance of physical activity due to pain; (c) Withdrawal from social activities or normal contact with others, including work, recreation, or other social contacts; (d) Failure to restore preinjury function after a period of disability such that the physical capacity is insufficient to pursue work, family, or recreational needs; (e) Development of psychosocial sequelae that limits function or recovery after the initial incident, including anxiety, fear-avoidance, depression, sleep disorders, or nonorganic illness behaviors (with a reasonable probability to respond to treatment intervention); (f) The diagnosis is not primarily a personality disorder or psychological condition without a physical component; (g) There is evidence of continued use of prescription pain medications (particularly those that may result in tolerance, dependence or abuse) without evidence of improvement in pain or function.
- (2) Previous methods of treating chronic pain have been unsuccessful and there is an absence of other options likely to result in significant clinical improvement.
- (3) An adequate and thorough multidisciplinary evaluation has been made. This should include pertinent validated diagnostic testing that addresses the following: (a) A physical exam that rules out conditions that require treatment prior to initiating the program. All diagnostic procedures necessary to rule out treatable pathology, including imaging studies and invasive injections (used for diagnosis), should be completed prior to considering a patient a candidate for a program. The exception is diagnostic procedures that were repeatedly requested and not authorized. Although the primary emphasis is on the work-related injury, underlying non-work related pathology that contributes to pain and decreased function may need to be addressed and treated by a primary care physician prior to or coincident to starting treatment; (b) Evidence of a screening evaluation should be provided when addiction is present or strongly suspected; (c) Psychological testing using a validated instrument to identify pertinent

areas that need to be addressed in the program (including but not limited to mood disorder, sleep disorder, relationship dysfunction, distorted beliefs about pain and disability, coping skills and/or locus of control regarding pain and medical care) or diagnoses that would better be addressed using other treatment should be performed;

(d) An evaluation of social and vocational issues that require assessment.

(4) If a goal of treatment is to prevent or avoid controversial or optional surgery, a trial of 10 visits (80 hours) may be implemented to assess whether surgery may be avoided.

(5) If a primary reason for treatment in the program is addressing possible substance use issues, an evaluation with an addiction clinician may be indicated upon entering the program to establish the most appropriate treatment approach (pain program vs. substance dependence program). This must address evaluation of drug abuse or diversion (and prescribing drugs in a non-therapeutic manner). In this particular case, once drug abuse or diversion issues are addressed, a 10-day trial may help to establish a diagnosis, and determine if the patient is not better suited for treatment in a substance dependence program. Addiction consultation can be incorporated into a pain program. If there is indication that substance dependence may be a problem, there should be evidence that the program has the capability to address this type of pathology prior to approval.

(6) Once the evaluation is completed, a treatment plan should be presented with specifics for treatment of identified problems, and outcomes that will be followed.

(7) There should be documentation that the patient has motivation to change, and is willing to change their medication regimen (including decreasing or actually weaning substances known for dependence). There should also be some documentation that the patient is aware that successful treatment may change compensation and/or other secondary gains. In questionable cases, an opportunity for a brief treatment trial may improve assessment of patient motivation and/or willingness to decrease habituating medications.

(8) Negative predictors of success (as outlined above) should be identified, and if present, the pre-program goals should indicate how these will be addressed.

(9) If a program is planned for a patient that has been continuously disabled for greater than 24 months, the outcomes for the necessity of use should be clearly identified, as there is conflicting evidence that chronic pain programs provide return-to-work beyond this period. These other desirable types of outcomes include decreasing post-treatment care including medications, injections and surgery. This cautionary statement should not preclude patients off work for over two years from being admitted to a multidisciplinary pain management program with demonstrated positive outcomes in this population.

(10) Treatment is not suggested for longer than 2 weeks without evidence of compliance and significant demonstrated efficacy as documented by subjective and objective gains. (Note: Patients may get worse before they get better. For example, objective gains may be moving joints that are stiff from lack of use, resulting in increased subjective pain.) However, it is also not suggested that a continuous course of treatment be interrupted at two weeks solely to document these gains, if there are preliminary indications that they are being made on a concurrent basis.

(11) Integrative summary reports that include treatment goals, compliance, progress assessment with objective measures and stage of treatment, must be made available upon request at least on a bi-weekly basis during the course of the treatment program.

(12) Total treatment duration should generally not exceed 20 full-day (160 hours) sessions (or the equivalent in part-day sessions if required by part-time work, transportation, childcare, or comorbidities). (Sanders, 2005) Treatment duration in excess of 160 hours requires a clear rationale for the specified extension and reasonable goals to be achieved. Longer durations require individualized care plans explaining why improvements cannot be achieved without an extension as well as evidence of documented improved outcomes from the facility (particularly in terms of the specific outcomes that are to be addressed).

(13) At the conclusion and subsequently, neither re-enrollment in repetition of the same or similar rehabilitation program (e.g. work hardening, work conditioning, out-patient medical rehabilitation) is medically warranted for the same condition or injury (with possible exception for a medically necessary organized detox program). Prior to entry into a program the evaluation should clearly indicate the necessity for the type of program required, and providers should determine upfront which program their patients would benefit more from. A chronic pain program should not be considered a "stepping stone" after less intensive programs, but prior participation in a work conditioning or work hardening program does not preclude an opportunity for entering a chronic pain program if otherwise indicated.

(14) Suggestions for treatment post-program should be well documented and provided to the referral physician. The patient may require time-limited, less intensive post-treatment with the program itself. Defined goals for these interventions and planned duration should be specified.

(15) Post-treatment medication management is particularly important. Patients that have been identified as having substance abuse issues generally require some sort of continued addiction follow-up to avoid relapse.

Inpatient pain rehabilitation programs: These programs typically consist of more intensive functional rehabilitation and medical care than their outpatient counterparts. They may be appropriate for patients who: (1) don't have the minimal functional capacity to participate effectively in an outpatient program; (2) have medical conditions that require more intensive oversight; (3) are receiving large amounts of medications necessitating medication weaning or detoxification; or (4) have complex medical or psychological diagnosis that benefit from more intensive observation and/or additional consultation during the rehabilitation process. (Keel, 1998) (Kool, 2005) (Buchner, 2006) (Kool, 2007) As with outpatient pain rehabilitation programs, the most effective programs combine intensive, daily biopsychosocial rehabilitation with a functional restoration approach. If a primary focus is drug treatment, the initial evaluation should attempt to identify the most appropriate treatment plan (a drug treatment /detoxification approach vs. a multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary treatment program).

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
- 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)