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Notice of Independent Review Decision

DATE OF REVIEW: 12/12/11

IRO CASE NO.:

DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICE OR SERVICES IN DISPUTE:

Item in dispute: 80 hours of Chronic Pain Program

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

Board Certified Psychologist

REVIEW OUTCOME

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

Upheld

INFORMATION PROVIDED TO THE IRO FOR REVIEW

1. Includes initial utilization of review dated 10/10/2011
2. Peer review determination dated 11/07/2011
3. Initial behavioral medicine consultation dated 04/08/2011
4. Psychological testing results dated 09/23/2011
5. Assessment/evaluation for chronic pain management program dated 08/17/2011
6. Chronic pain management interdisciplinary plan and goals of treatment dated 08/12/2011
7. Clinic note date 08/26/2011
8. Physical Performance Evaluation dated 08/10/2011
9. Copy of psychological testing results dated 09/23/2011
10. Initial request for 80 hours in chronic pain management dated 10/04/2011
11. Reconsideration for request for 80 hours in chronic pain management program dated 10/31/2011,
12. Copy of reconsideration for chronic pain management program dated 10/31/2011

PATIENT CLINICAL HISTORY (SUMMARY):

The patient is a male who reported a date of injury of xx/xx/xx. A physical performance evaluation dated 08/10/2011 indicated that mechanism of injury was getting his foot stuck on the chain of a tailpipe with pain in his knee. It was determined at that time that claimant could not return to work at his stated occupation in his given condition, and the chronic pain management program was recommended. On 08/26/211, this claimant was seen in-clinic for follow up. At that time, he had right knee pain. He had pain on flexion and extension of the right knee. There was pain on ambulation and he walked with a cane. McMurray and drawer signs were negative. There was no effusion. Reflexes were normal in the lower extremities. Recommendation at that time was to continue on a current weight loss program prior to surgery. He was recommended for chronic pain management program.

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

The initial utilization review dated 10/10/2011 indicates that there is no benefit to be envisioned by providing a tertiary pain program while the claimant was awaiting weight reduction and surgery for his left knee. It was noted that following successful weight loss and surgery or ruling out surgery, a more comprehensive analysis from a behavioral and psychometric perspective would be necessary to demonstrate that he manifested a chronic pain syndrome and was an appropriate candidate for a chronic pain program. The appeal utilization review dated 11/07/2011 indicated that this claimant also needed weight reduction and surgery to establish the necessity of a chronic pain management program. Furthermore, it stated that the request was inconsistent with requirements that there was absence of other options likely to result in significant clinical improvement, as the weight reduction had not occurred and AS the surgery had not occurred. Furthermore, it indicated that all diagnostic procedures, necessary to rule out treatable pathology, including imaging studies and invasive injections should be completed prior to considering the patient a candidate for program, have not been demonstrated as the weight loss program has not been demonstrated and the surgery has not been demonstrated. Therefore, the appeal was upheld. This reviewer agrees with those determinations, and the request for a chronic pain management program is not indicated.

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

REFERENCES: Official Disability Guidelines, Chronic Pain Chapter, Online Version.