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An Independent Review Organization

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Review Outcome:

A description of the qualifications for each physician or other health care provider who reviewed the decision:

Orthopedic Surgery

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)

Description of the service or services in dispute:

MRI

Patient Clinical History (Summary)

The patient is a male who initially presented with complaints of low back pain. The clinical note dated 09/13/12 indicates the patient complaining of ongoing low back pain. The note indicates the patient utilizing Hydrocodone for pain relief. The procedural note dated 10/08/13 indicates the patient undergoing an epidural steroid injection in the lumbar region. The operative note dated 02/24/14 indicates the patient undergoing a laminectomy and foraminotomy at L4-5. The clinical note dated 05/01/14 indicates the patient continuing with low back complaints. The clinical note dated 09/09/14 indicates the patient continuing with the use of Norco as well as Zanaflex for pain relief. There was also an indication the patient had undergone the use of a Medrol dose pack. The patient continued with low back complaints with radiating pain to the left lower extremity. There is an indication the patient has complaints of headaches originating in the cervical region. The headaches did appear as cervicogenic headaches at that time. There is an indication the patient had previously undergone a surgical intervention in the neck. The patient was being recommended for an MRI of the cervical region at that time. The electrodiagnostic studies completed on 09/09/14 revealed a left sided L5 radiculopathy. The CT myelogram of the lumbar spine dated 10/14/14 revealed a previous L3 through L5 fusion. The clinical note dated 11/04/14 indicates the patient being recommended for a hardware injection in the lumbar region.

The utilization reviews dated 09/30/14 & 10/08/14 resulted in denials as no significant information was submitted regarding the medical need for an MRI of the cervical spine. No neurologic findings were identified in the upper extremities.

Analysis and Explanation of the Decision include Clinical Basis, Findings and Conclusions used to support the decision.

The documentation indicates the patient having complaints of cervicogenic headaches. An MRI of the cervical spine is indicated for patients with ongoing symptoms following a full course of conservative therapy. No information was submitted regarding the patient's functional deficits in the cervical region. Additionally, no neurologic involvement was identified in the upper extremities. Furthermore, no information was submitted regarding the patient's completion of any conservative treatments addressing the cervical complaints. Given these factors, the request is not indicated as medically necessary. As such, it is the opinion of this reviewer that the request for an MRI of the cervical spine is not recommended as medically necessary.

A description and the source of the screening criteria or other clinical basis used to make the decision:

- ACOEM-America College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine um
- knowledgebase AHCPH-Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Guidelines
- DWC-Division of Workers Compensation Policies and
- Guidelines European Guidelines for Management of
- Chronic Low Back Pain Interqual Criteria
- Medical Judgment, Clinical Experience, and expertise in accordance with accepted medical standards
- Mercy Center Consensus Conference Guidelines
- Milliman Care Guidelines
- ODG-Official Disability Guidelines and Treatment Guidelines
- Pressley Reed, the Medical Disability Advisor
- Texas Guidelines for Chiropractic Quality Assurance and 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)