

Applied Independent Review

An Independent Review Organization

Phone Number:

(855) 233-4304

P. O. Box 121144

Arlington, TX 76012

Fax Number:

(817) 349-2700

Email: appliedindependentreview@irosolutions.com

Applied Independent Review

Notice of Independent Review Decision

Case Number: XXXX

Date of Notice: 07/10/2018

Review Outcome:

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

Anesthesiology And Pain Management

Description of the service or services in dispute:

Facet block injections C2/C3, C3/C4 medial branch, cervical with sedation

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)

Patient Clinical History (Summary)

The patient is XX with a history of an occupational claim from XX. The mechanism of injury is detailed as a fall. The patient had completed physical therapy x12 with minimal improvement. The patient had ongoing neck pain, right shoulder pain as well as headaches. The patient decreased range of motion to the right upper extremity and pain over the bilateral trochanters. Cervical MRI from XX from the patient to have a broadbased posterior herniation of C5-6 disc causing mild narrowing of the central canal and neural foramina, bilaterally; diffuse bulge at C6-7 causing mild narrowing of the central canal and neural foramina bilaterally; mild diffuse disc bulge at C4-5 and C7-T1 without any significant central canal or neural foraminal narrowing and mild generalized facet and uncovertebral arthropathy. On physical examination XX had decreased range of motion cervical spine with spasm and tenderness at right C2-3, C3-4 facets. The patient was diagnosed with cervical sprain/strain and lumbar sprain. The patient was recommended right C2, C3, and C4 medial branch blocks and if successful, physical therapy and radiofrequency ablation of the right C2-3 and C3-4 medial branches with sedation of the patient had a

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

The Official Disability Guidelines state facet joint diagnostic blocks are recommended prior to facet neurotomy (a procedure that is considered “under study”). The clinical presentation must be consistent with facet joint pain, signs & symptoms generally described as the following: (1) axial neck pain (either with no radiation or rarely past the shoulders); (2) tenderness to palpation in the paravertebral areas (over the facet region); (3) decreased range of motion (particularly with extension and rotation); and (4) absence of radicular and/or neurologic findings. The use of IV sedation may be grounds to negate the results of a diagnostic block, and should only be given in cases of extreme anxiety. In this case, the patient had tenderness at right C2-3, C3-4 facets. XX had decreased range of motion. The documentation also noted the patient had needle phobia and therefore, would require sedation in conjunction with the procedure. Therefore, the denial of facet block injections C2/C3, C3/C4 medial branch, cervical with sedation is medically necessary and overturned.

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 AHRQ-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 Médical **Literature** (Provide a description)

- ☐ Other evidence based, scientifically valid, outcome focused guidelines (Provide a description)