

Under the provisions of Section 413.031 of the Texas Workers' Compensation Act, Title 5, Subtitle A of the Texas Labor Code, effective January 1, 2002 and Commission Rule 133.305 and 133.308 titled Medical Dispute Resolution by Independent Review Organizations, the Medical Review Division assigned an IRO to conduct a review of the disputed medical necessity issues between the requestor and the respondent.

The Medical Review Division has reviewed the IRO decision and determined that **the requestor prevailed** on the issues of medical necessity. Therefore, upon receipt of this Order and in accordance with §133.308(q)(9), the Commission hereby orders the respondent and non-prevailing party to **refund the requestor \$460.00** for the paid IRO fee. For the purposes of determining compliance with the order, the Commission will add 20 days to the date the order was deemed received as outlined on page one of this order.

In accordance with §413.031(e), it is a defense for the carrier if the carrier timely complies with the IRO decision.

Based on review of the disputed issues within the request, the Medical Review Division has determined that **medical necessity was the only issue** to be resolved. The work conditioning and work hardening services were found to be medically necessary. The respondent raised no other reasons for denying reimbursement for these work conditioning and work hardening charges.

This Finding and Decision is hereby issued this 20th day of February 2003.

Carol R. Lawrence
Medical Dispute Resolution Officer
Medical Review Division

On this basis, and pursuant to §§402.042, 413.016, 413.031, and 413.019 of the Act, the Medical Review Division hereby ORDERS the respondent to pay the unpaid medical fees in accordance with the fair and reasonable rate as set forth in Commission Rule 133.1(a)(8) plus all accrued interest due at the time of payment to the requestor within 20 days of receipt of this order. This Order is applicable to dates of service 10/15/01 through 12/21/01 in this dispute.

The respondent is prohibited from asserting additional denial reasons relative to this Decision upon issuing payment to the requestor in accordance with this Order (Rule 133.307(j)(2)).

This Order is hereby issued this 20th day of February 2003.

David R. Martinez, Manager
Medical Dispute Resolution
Medical Review Division

DRM/crl

December 23, 2002

NOTICE OF INDEPENDENT REVIEW DECISION

RE: MDR Tracking #: M5-02-2526-01

___ has been certified by the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) as an independent review organization (IRO). ___ IRO Certificate Number is ___. Texas Worker's Compensation Commission (TWCC) Rule §133.308 allows for a claimant or provider to request an independent review of a Carrier's adverse medical necessity determination. TWCC assigned the above-reference case to ___ for independent review in accordance with this Rule.

___ has performed an independent review of the proposed care to determine whether or not the adverse determination was appropriate. Relevant medical records, documentation provided by the parties referenced above and other documentation and written information submitted regarding this appeal was reviewed during the performance of this independent review.

This case was reviewed by a practicing chiropractor on ___ external review panel. ___ chiropractor reviewer signed a statement certifying that no known conflicts of interest exist between this chiropractor and any of the treating physicians or providers or any of the physicians or providers who reviewed this case for a determination prior to the referral to ___ for independent review. In addition, ___ chiropractor reviewer certified that the review was performed without bias for or against any party in this case.

Clinical History

This case concerns a 48 year-old female who sustained a work related injury on ___. The patient reports that she was working as a machine operator when she hurt her back and neck while twisting and turning a cylinder. The patient reported that she has had MRI's of her back showing anterior wedging of T11 and T12. The patient has been treated with passive and active rehabilitation to include cold/hot packs, massage, ultrasound, exercises, and injections.

Requested Services

Work conditioning and work hardening rendered from 10/15/01 through 12/21/01.

Decision

The Carrier's denial of coverage for these services is overturned.

Rationale/Basis for Decision

___ chiropractor reviewer determined that the work hardening and conditioning rendered from 10/15/01 through 12/21/01 was medically necessary. ___ chiropractor reviewer explained that when attempting to recondition a patient, the frequency and intensity of treatment rendered in this patient's condition, was medically necessary. (Mercy Guidelines). Therefore, ___ chiropractor consultant has concluded that the work hardening and conditioning treatment services rendered from 10/15/01 through 12/21/01 were medically necessary to treat this patient's condition.

Sincerely,