

NOTICE OF INDEPENDENT REVIEW DECISION

November 13, 2002

RE: MDR Tracking #: M2-03-0131-01
IRO Certificate #: 4326

___ has been certified by the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) as an independent review organization (IRO). The Texas Workers' Compensation Commission (TWCC) has assigned the above referenced case to for independent review in accordance with TWCC Rule §133.308 which allows for medical dispute resolution by an IRO.

___ has performed an independent review of the proposed care to determine if the adverse determination was appropriate. In performing this review, relevant medical records, any documents utilized by the parties referenced above in making the adverse determination, and any documentation and written information submitted in support of the appeal was reviewed.

The independent review was performed by a ___ physician reviewer who is board certified in anesthesiology which is the same specialty as the treating physician. The ___ physician reviewer has signed a certification statement stating that no known conflicts of interest exist between him or her and any of the treating physicians or providers or any of the physicians or providers who reviewed the case for a determination prior to the referral to ___ for independent review. In addition, the reviewer has certified that the review was performed without bias for or against any party to this case.

Clinical History

This 38 year old female sustained a work-related injury on ___ when she slipped and landed on her back. The patient was treated by a chiropractor and an MRI performed on 06/25/01 revealed disc dehydration, desiccation, and degeneration at L5-S1 with no evidence of acute structural pathology. The patient underwent electro-diagnostic studies on 06/28/01 that were unremarkable. The patient has undergone a series of epidural facet block injections with relief. The treating physician is recommending that the patient undergo a series of three lumbar epidural blocks.

Requested Service(s)

A series of three lumbar epidural blocks

Decision

It is determined that the series of three lumbar epidural blocks is medically necessary to treat this patient's condition.

Rationale/Basis for Decision

The patient's condition involves left leg pain, numbness, and weakness. She has been diagnosed with lumbar radiculitis. Her electrodiagnostic evaluation and MRI do not show any surgically correctable lesions. Lumbar epidural steroid injections are a reasonable and efficacious treatment option for this patient's condition. Therefore, the series of lumbar epidural blocks is medically necessary.

This decision by the IRO is deemed to be a TWCC decision and order.

YOUR RIGHT TO REQUEST A HEARING

Either party to this medical dispute may disagree with all or part of the decision and has a right to request a hearing.

If disputing a spinal surgery prospective decision a request for a hearing must be in writing and it must be received by the TWCC Chief Clerk of Proceedings within **10** (10) days of your receipt of this decision (20 Tex. Admin. Code 142.5 (c)).

If disputing other prospective medical necessity (preauthorization) decisions a request for a hearing must be in writing and it must be received by the TWCC Chief Clerk of Proceedings within **20** (twenty) days of your receipt of this decision (28 Tex. Admin Code 148.3).

This Decision is deemed received by you 5 (five) days after it was mailed (28 Tex. Admin Code 102.4(h) or 102.5(d)). A request for hearing should be sent to: Chief Clerk of Proceedings, Texas Workers' Compensation Commission, P.O. Box 40669, Austin, Texas, 78704-0012. **A copy of this decision should be attached to the request.**

The party appealing the decision shall deliver a copy of its written request for a hearing to all other parties involved in the dispute (Commission Rule 133.308 (t)(2)).

Sincerely,