

September 16, 2003

NOTICE OF INDEPENDENT REVIEW DECISION

RE: MDR Tracking #: M2-03-1720-01-SS

___ has been certified by the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) as an independent review organization (IRO). ___' IRO Certificate Number is 5348. 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 physician on the ___ external review panel. The reviewer has met the requirements for the ADL of TWCC or has been approved as an exception to the ADL requirement. This physician is board certified in neurosurgery. The ___ physician reviewer signed a statement certifying that no known conflicts of interest exist between this physician 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, the ___ physician reviewer certified that the review was performed without bias for or against any party in this case.

Clinical History

This case concerns a 47 year-old female who sustained a work related injury on ___. The patient reported that while at work she was unloading some pallets of rubber crack seal. The patient was bending and twisting when she began to experience left hip pain. The patient reported that she experiences left hip pain, and left buttock pain that radiates down her leg and into her foot. The patient underwent an MRI scan that showed a bulging disc at the L4-L5 level. The patient has also undergone X-Rays, CT/myelogram and EMG testing. The patient has been treated with nerve root block, epidural steroid injection, physical therapy and oral medications.

Requested Services

L4-L5 and L5-S1 left sided hemilaminotomy with decompression.

Decision

The Carrier's denial of authorization for the requested services is upheld.

Rationale/Basis for Decision

The ___ physician reviewer noted that this case concerns a 47 year-old female who sustained a work related injury to her left hip on ___. The ___ physician reviewer also noted that an MRI scan showed a bulging disc at the L4-L5 level. The ___ physician reviewer further noted that the patient has been treated with nerve root block, epidural steroid injection, physical therapy and oral medications. The ___ physician reviewer indicated that the patient has been referred for a L4-L5 and L5-S1 left sided hemilaminotomy with decompression. The ___ physician reviewer

explained that the documentation provided did not show evidence of nerve root compression by either an MRI or CT myelogram. The ___ physician reviewer also explained that the documentation provided did not show evidence of demonstrable pathology causing a radiculopathy. The ___ physician reviewer further explained that without evidence of nerve root compression or radiculopathy, there is no rationale for the proposed surgery. Therefore, the ___ physician consultant concluded that the requested L4-L5 and L5-S1 left sided hemilaminotomy with decompression is not medically necessary to treat this patient's condition at this time.

This decision 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 (ten)** 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 a hearing should be sent to:

Chief Clerk of Proceedings/Appeals Clerk
P.O. Box 17787
Austin, TX 78744
Fax: 512-804-4011

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,

I hereby verify that a copy of this Independent Review Organization (IRO) Decision was sent to the carrier, the requestor and claimant via facsimile or U.S. Postal Service from the office of the IRO on this 16th day of September 2003.