

IRO Certificate #4599

NOTICE OF INDEPENDENT REVIEW DECISION

October 28, 2003

Re: IRO Case # M2-03 -1750

Texas Worker's Compensation Commission:

___ has been certified as an independent review organization (IRO) and has been authorized to perform independent reviews of medical necessity for the Texas Worker's Compensation Commission (TWCC). Texas HB. 2600, Rule 133.308 effective January 1, 2002, allows a claimant or provider who has received an adverse medical necessity determination from a carrier's internal process, to request an independent review by an IRO.

In accordance with the requirement that TWCC assign cases to certified IROs, TWCC assigned this case to ___ for an independent review. ___ has performed an independent review of the proposed care to determine if the adverse determination was appropriate. For that purpose, ___ received relevant medical records, any documents obtained from parties in making the adverse determination, and any other documents and/or written information submitted in support of the appeal.

The case was reviewed by a physician who is Board Certified in Neurological Surgery, and who has met the requirements for the TWCC Approved Doctor List or who has been granted an exception from the ADL. He or she has signed a certification statement attesting 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 referral to ___ for independent review. In addition, the certification statement further attests that the review was performed without bias for or against the carrier, medical provider, or any other party to this case.

The determination of the ___ reviewer who reviewed this case, based on the medical records provided, is as follows:

History

The patient is a 26-year-old female who slipped and twisted her back while she was walking down stairs in ___. She was seven months pregnant at the time, and has since delivered a child who now weighs over 21 pounds. The patient has increasing discomfort when she lifts the child. The patient was treated with physical therapy with traction, epidural steroid injections and various medications without significant relief of her ongoing discomfort that extends from her back into her left lower extremity. A 7/26/02 MRI showed a small L5-S1 disk protrusion centrally and slightly to the left, but without any S1 nerve root compromise. Electromyographic evaluation failed to reveal evidence of radiculopathy.

Requested Service(s)

Lumbar discogram

Decision

I disagree with the carrier's decision to deny the requested treatment.

Rationale

Although CT myelographic evaluation might be more appropriate in coming to conclusions about whether a surgical lesion is present in the lumbar spine, discographic evaluation may be of benefit if the surgeon has considerable confidence in the discographer. Discography sometimes gives a better indication of problems related to weight bearing in the lumbar spine than other tests. It appears from the records provided for this review that the patient's symptoms mainly appear in weight bearing situations rather than when she is lying down in the position in which the MRI was performed.

This medical necessity decision by an Independent Review Organization is deemed to be a Commission decision and order.

YOUR RIGHT TO REQUEST A HEARING

Either party to 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) calendar days of your receipt of this decision (28 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) calendar days of your receipt of this decision (28 Tex. Admin. Code 142.5(c)).

This decision is deemed received by you 5 (five) days after it was mailed or the date of fax (28 Tex. Admin. Code 102.5(d)). A request for a hearing and a **copy of this decision** must be sent to:

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

The party appealing this decision shall deliver a copy of its written request for a hearing to other party involved in this dispute.

Sincerely,

In accordance with Commission Rule 102.4 (b), I hereby certify that a copy of this Independent Review Organization (IRO) decision was sent to the carrier and the requestor or claimant via facsimile or US Postal Service from the office of the IRO on this 30th day of October 2003.