

December 17, 2003

David Martinez  
TWCC Medical Dispute Resolution  
MS-48  
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Austin, TX 78744-1609

MDR Tracking #: M2-04-0499-01  
IRO #: 5251

\_\_\_ has been certified by the Texas Department of Insurance as an Independent Review Organization. The Texas Worker's Compensation Commission has assigned this 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, all relevant medical records and documentation utilized to make the adverse determination, along with any documentation and written information submitted, was reviewed.

The independent review was performed by a matched peer with the treating doctor. This case was reviewed by a licensed Medical Doctor with a specialty and board certification in Radiology. The reviewer is on the TWCC Approved Doctor List (ADL). The \_\_\_ health care professional has signed a certification statement stating that no known conflicts of interest exist between the reviewer and any of the treating doctors or providers or any of the doctors 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 the dispute.

#### CLINICAL HISTORY

\_\_\_ is a 49-year-old male who originally sustained injury on \_\_\_, though the details of that injury were not supplied. He has apparently had three spinal surgeries, but dates and details are unknown to the reviewer. A lumbar myelogram on 2/4/00 showed L4/5 laminectomy and an L4/5 intradisc cage (spacer). No other surgical hardware or significant findings were noted. A follow-up myelo-CT done the same day showed the above findings, as well as a minimal disc bulge at L3/4, not compromising the neural foramina or central canal. No other abnormalities were noted. A lumbar MRI dated 6/23/03 showed posterior element hardware (details reduced by metal magnetic susceptibility artifact) with intervertebral disc cages at the L3/4 and L4/5 levels. A minimal L5/S1 disc bulge was noted, but there were no other significant abnormalities. \_\_\_ has had continuing and increasing pain, despite conservative treatment with analgesics, narcotics and hardware needle injection blocks.

#### REQUESTED SERVICE

A repeat lumbar CT scan is requested for this patient.

#### DECISION

The reviewer disagrees with the prior adverse determination.

BASIS FOR THE DECISION

Since the 2/4/00 CT, additional cage and multi-level hardware has been added. This hardware, and its relationship with the bony and disc structures, were not optimally seen with the 6/23/03 MRI (because of magnetic artifact). This patient continues to have significant pain, despite medication and pain blocks. It is possible that the hardware/bony interface could be abnormal and that the hardware might have to be adjusted or removed. These relationships would be best evaluated with a combination of radiographic and CT examinations.

\_\_\_ has performed an independent review solely to determine the medical necessity of the health services that are the subject of the review. \_\_\_ has made no determinations regarding benefits available under the injured employee's policy.

As an officer of \_\_\_, I certify that there is no known conflict between the reviewer, \_\_\_ and/or any officer/employee of the IRO with any person or entity that is a party to the dispute.

\_\_\_ is forwarding by mail and, in the case of time sensitive matters by facsimile, a copy of this finding to the treating doctor, payor and/or URA, patient and the TWCC.

Sincerely,

**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.

<p><b>I hereby certify, in accordance with TWCC Rule 102.4 (h), that a copy of this Independent Review Organization decision was sent to the carrier, requestor, claimant (and/or the claimant's representative) and the TWCC via facsimile, U.S. Postal Service or both on this 17<sup>th</sup> day of December 2003.</b></p>
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