

NOTICE OF INDEPENDENT REVIEW DECISION

April 9, 2004

MDR Tracking #: M2-04-0961-01
IRO Certificate #: IRO4326

The ___ 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 and pain management 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 42-year-old female sustained a back injury on ___ while bending forward to set down coffee pot when feeling a popping sensation followed by back pain to her lower back. Treatment has included oral medications Lortab, Ultram, Darvocet, Soma, Mobic, and Skelaxin, epidural steroid injections, MRI, and physical therapy. The MRI showed disc desiccation and small posterior disc bulge impinging the thecal sac L4-5, and disc desiccation at L5-S1.

Requested Service(s)

L4-5, L5-S1 lumbar provocative discogram with fluoroscopy and sedation

Decision

It is determined that the L4-5, L5-S1 lumbar provocative discogram with fluoroscopy and sedation is medically necessary to treat this patient's condition.

Rationale/Basis for Decision

The MRI shows a bulging disc with no neural impingement. The patient has predominately low back pain that has not responded to conservative treatment. There is not neurological deficit, and the pain is worse with flexion.

The most likely etiology of the pain is the disc. A discogram is indicated to delineate the pain generator and to plan future treatment. At this point in the patient's course, discography is consistent with the standard of care. Therefore, it is determined that the L4-5, L5-S1 lumbar provocative discogram with fluoroscopy and sedation is medically necessary to treat this patient.

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** (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 hearing and a **copy of this decision** must be sent to: Chief Clerk of Proceedings/Appeals Clerk, Texas Workers' Compensation Commission, 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 all other parties involved in this dispute.

Sincerely,

<p>In accordance with Commission Rule 102.4 (h), 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 9th day of April 2004.</p>
