



Specialty Independent Review Organization, Inc.

June 14, 2005

TWCC Medical Dispute Resolution
7551 Metro Center Suite 100
Austin, TX 78744

Patient:
TWCC #:
MDR Tracking #: M2-05-1425-01
IRO #: 5284

Specialty IRO 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 Specialty IRO for independent review in accordance with TWCC Rule 133.308, which allows for medical dispute resolution by an IRO.

Specialty 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.

This case was reviewed by a licensed Medical Doctor with a specialty in Pain Management and Anesthesiology. The reviewer is on the TWCC ADL. The Specialty IRO 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 Specialty IRO 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

This 43-year-old man sustained an injury on ___ to his left leg and lower back. He has had arthroscopy of the right knee after MRI of right knee and lumbar spine.

Records Reviewed:

Records from Doctor/Facility: TWCC Independent review assignment; CorVel pre-authorization determination; Request for pre-authorization-Marshall Orthopaedics; Dr. Duncan Notes; TWCC Compensation work status reports; Right knee scope films; Operative report-Marshall regional medical center; Lab report-Marshall regional medical center; Medical imaging reports-Marshall regional medical center

Records from patient: TWCC Compensation work status reports; ETMC First physicians referral; ETMC treatment notes; Lab reports-Marshall regional medical center; Dr. Duncan notes; Medical imaging report-Marshall regional medical center; CorVel pre-authorization determinations; Operative report-Marshall regional medical center; TWCC prospective review request

Records from Carrier: Letter from Harris and Harris; CorVel pre-authorization determinations; Medical imaging reports-Marshall regional medical center

REQUESTED SERVICE

The item in dispute is the prospective medical necessity of lumbar epidural steroid injections.

DECISION

The reviewer agrees with the previous adverse determination.

BASIS FOR THE DECISION

In two separate studies, the efficacy of epidural steroids in patients with spinal stenosis was reviewed. (Rydevik BL, Cohen DB, Kostuik JP: Spine epidural steroids for patients with lumbar spinal stenosis. Spine 1997; 22 (19): 2313-2317 & Fukusaki M, Kobayashi I, Hara T, et al. Symptoms of spinal stenosis do not improve after epidural steroid injection. Clin J Pain 1998; 14: 148-151). Both studies demonstrated poor response in patients who did not have disc herniation with radicular symptomatology.

Specialty IRO has performed an independent review solely to determine the medical necessity of the health services that are the subject of the review. Specialty IRO has made no determinations regarding benefits available under the injured employee's policy. Specialty IRO believes it has made a reasonable attempt to obtain all medical records for this review and afforded the requestor, respondent and treating doctor an opportunity to provide additional information in a convenient and timely manner.

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

Sincerely,

Wendy Perelli, CEO

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.

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

In the case of other *prospective (preauthorization) medical necessity* disputes 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, Texas Worker's Compensation Commission, P.O. Box 17787, Austin, TX 78744. The fax number is 512-804-4011. A copy of this decision should be attached to the request.

The party appealing this decision shall deliver a copy of its written request for a hearing to all other parties involved in the dispute, per TWCC rule 133.308(u)(2).

Sincerely,

Wendy Perelli, CEO

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 14th day of June 2005

Signature of Specialty IRO Representative:

Name of Specialty IRO Representative: Wendy Perelli