

August 20, 2003

Re: Medical Dispute Resolution
MDR #: M5-03-2091-01
TWCC#:

IRI has performed an independent review of the medical records of the above-named case to determine medical necessity. In performing this review, IRI reviewed relevant medical records, any documents provided by the parties referenced above, and any documentation and written information submitted in support of the dispute.

The independent review was performed by a matched peer with the treating health care provider. This case was reviewed by a physician who is Certified in Chiropractic Medicine.

Clinical History:

This female claimant sought medical intervention on 01/14/02 for work-related accumulative trauma disorder. She was appropriately evaluated by orthopedic and neurological specialists. Surgical intervention was ruled out. The patient continued with conservative treatment, terminating in a referral to a participation in a CARF-certified work hardening program.

Disputed Services:

FCE and work hardening program during the period of 05/21/02 through 06/19/02.

Decision:

The reviewer disagrees with the determination of the insurance carrier and is of the opinion that the FCE and work hardening program were medically necessary in this case.

Rationale:

The clinical basis for this determination relies on the provider's documentation of persisting clinical signs and symptoms present in this patient that were easily exacerbated by activities required of her in her present occupation and probable future occupations. The screening criteria employed in arriving at this determination were primarily the strength of the documentation submitted, as interpreted secondarily through my 13 years of clinical experience of daily treatment of patients with the same or similar ailments.

Within the spectrum of medical necessity, there will exist on one side of the spectrum patients who are so egregiously injured that they will meet the criteria for entrance into a work hardening program with few questions asked. Conversely, on the other end of the spectrum will be those patients who minimally meet the criteria for entrance, and about whom many questions will be asked and extensive documentation required.

The clinical material first submitted for review, combined with the additional documentation that was requested and submitted, led the reviewer to the opinion that this patient qualifies as one of the latter instances, that of marginally qualifying for work hardening within the spectrum of medical necessity.

According to Texas Labor Code 408:021(a), an employee is entitled to the care reasonably required in association with their injury and the treatment thereof. If the patient's condition is not stable, the care to maintain and promote healing is medically necessary.

and I certify that the reviewing healthcare professional in this case has certified to our organization that there are no known conflicts of interest that exist between him and any of the treating physicians or other health care providers or any of the physicians or other health care providers who reviewed this case for determination prior to referral to the Independent Review Organization.

Sincerely,