



A division of ZRC Services, Inc.

IRO - AMERICA - Ziroc

June 12, 2003

TWCC Medical Dispute Resolution
4000 IH 35 South, MS 48
Austin, TX 78704

Patient:
TWCC #:
MDR Tracking #: M5 03 1874 01
IRO #: 5251

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

Ziroc has performed an independent review of the care rendered 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 Doctor of Chiropractic. The Ziroc 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 Ziroc 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 patient was injured on her job with Sprint while working in customer service taking inbound calls and entering data into a computer. She sought care from Dr. Cary Fabacher, who apparently referred the treatment to Medway Health Centers. The patient was diagnosed with Carpal Tunnel Syndrome and was treated with conservative care. Electrodiagnostic studies indicated left sided CTS, but she was actually symptomatic in both hands. Treatment consisted of passive therapy, active exercise and work hardening.

A RME was performed by Karl Erwin, MD, who determined that Carpal Tunnel Syndrome was not caused by occupational injury, but rather by normal diseases of life. He stated that numerous studies were performed to prove the theory, but none were cited. He did state that 8-10 weeks of care were reasonable on this case. Of note is that the patient declined injections on the wrists and there was no note of surgery. Peer review by Charles Crane, MD indicated that the work hardening was medically unnecessary.

DISPUTED SERVICES

The carrier has denied the medical necessity of work hardening and physical therapy from October 7, 2002 through December 6, 2002.

DECISION

The reviewer agrees with the prior adverse determination.

BASIS FOR THE DECISION

This patient was treated with very extensive care for several months. The passive/active treatment which was rendered was not documented as having a positive benefit to the patient's recovery. No explanation was received that would justify passive therapy several months after the onset of the pain. This patient worked a sedentary job and there is no indication that work hardening could possibly be of benefit. It is my opinion that work hardening is for the patient who is clearly unable to perform the level of work required in the job. As she was at least a sedentary patient, and her job description was sedentary, I see no reason for the work hardening. Additionally, there is no explanation from the treating clinic as to why this program was pursued. I would tend to agree with Dr. Crane's review that there is no indication to support such a program. As a result I unfortunately have to determine that the disputed services were not medically necessary.

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

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

Ziroc is forwarding this finding by US Postal Service to the TWCC.

Sincerely,

Nan Cunningham
President/CEO

CC: Ziroc Medical Director