MDR Tracking Number: M5-03-3005-01

Under the provisions of Section 413.031 of the Texas Workers' Compensation Act, Title 5, Subtitle A of the Texas Labor Code, effective June 17, 2001 and Commission Rule 133.305 titled Medical Dispute Resolution - General and 133.308 titled Medical Dispute Resolution by Independent Review Organizations, the Medical Review Division assigned an IRO to conduct a review of the disputed medical necessity issues between the requestor and the respondent. The dispute was received on 7-18-03.

The Medical Review Division has reviewed the IRO decision and determined that **the requestor prevailed** on the issues of medical necessity. Therefore, upon receipt of this Order and in accordance with §133.308(r)(9), the Commission hereby orders the respondent and non-prevailing party to **refund the requestor $460.00** for the paid IRO fee. For the purposes of determining compliance with the order, the Commission will add 20 days to the date the order was deemed received as outlined on page one of this order.

In accordance with §413.031(e), it is a defense for the carrier if the carrier timely complies with the IRO decision.

Based on review of the disputed issues within the request, the Medical Review Division has determined that **medical necessity was the only issue** to be resolved. The MRI, CT of neck/spine, and computerized tomography, 3-D reconstruction were found to be medically necessary. The respondent raised no other reasons for denying reimbursement for the above listed services.

The above Findings and Decision are hereby issued this 15th day of September 2003.

Dee Z. Torres
Medical Dispute Resolution Officer
Medical Review Division

On this basis, and pursuant to §§402.042, 413.016, 413.031, and 413.019 of the Act, the Medical Review Division hereby ORDERS the respondent to pay the unpaid medical fees in accordance with the fair and reasonable rate as set forth in Commission Rule 133.1(a)(8) plus all accrued interest due at the time of payment to the requestor within 20 days of receipt of this order. This Order is applicable to date of service 8-23-02 in this dispute.

The respondent is prohibited from asserting additional denial reasons relative to this Decision upon issuing payment to the requestor in accordance with this Order (Rule 133.307(j)(2)).

This Order is hereby issued this 15th day of September 2003.

Roy Lewis, Supervisor
Medical Dispute Resolution
Medical Review Division
RL/dzt

**NOTICE OF INDEPENDENT REVIEW DETERMINATION**

MDR Tracking Number: M5-03-3005-01

September 8, 2003

An independent review of the above-referenced case has been completed by a chiropractic doctor. The appropriateness of setting and medical necessity of proposed or rendered services is determined by the application of medical screening criteria published by ___, or by the application of medical screening criteria and protocols formally established by practicing physicians. All available clinical information, the medical necessity guidelines and the special circumstances of said case was considered in making the determination.

The independent review determination and reasons for the determination, including the clinical basis for the determination, is as follows:

See Attached Physician Determination

___ hereby certifies that the reviewing physician is on Texas Workers' Compensation Commission Approved Doctor List (ADL). Additionally, said physician has certified that no known conflicts of interest exist between him and any of the treating physicians or providers or any of the physicians or providers who reviewed the case for determination prior to referral to ___.

CLINICAL HISTORY

Available information suggests that this patient was injured at work on ___ when a metal pier struck the top of his head knocking him unconscious. He was taken to ___ where it was reported that cervical, thoracic, lumbar and Head CT imaging was negative. He was discharged with a cervical collar and later presented to his chiropractor, ___. Additional x-rays were taken by ___ suggesting a fracture of the C7 spinous process with other mechanical complications. The patient was referred for surgical consult with ___ on 8/14/02. C7 spinous fracture is confirmed with possible left facet complex injury mechanism suspected. Cervical MRI and CT scan is ordered by ___ in order to determine segmental stability and surgical implications of injury. EMG and NCV studies are ordered in order to assess symptoms of radiculopathy. Additional orders are made for myelogram, post-myelogram CT and CT reconstruction procedures as well as a possible bone scan as clinically indicated. Consultation is made with another spine surgeon, ___, essentially agreeing with ___ recommendations. Carrier's EOB from services performed 8/23/02 suggest that services were denied based on physician advisory's decision. However, carrier later reveals that no peer review of this case is made. Carrier's rationale for denial states as follows: "Routine spinal imaging tests (e.g. MRI, CT) are not generally recommended in the first 4 weeks of symptoms unless there is an indication for prompt surgical intervention or clinical findings of a serious condition affecting the spine. CT, 3-D reconstruction images are not medically necessary on a routine basis … These types of reformations may be necessary and useful in cases of spondylolisthesis, ***fracture***, spinal stenosis and disc herniation …"

REQUESTED SERVICE(S)
Medical necessity for MRI, CT of neck/spine. Computerized tomography, 3-D reconstruction. Date of service in dispute 8/23/02.

DECISION
Reverse prior denial. There appears to be significant clinical rationale and medical necessity supporting advanced imaging of this nature performed on this date of service.

RATIONALE/BASIS FOR DECISION
Based on carrier's own rationale and multiple qualified surgical/radiological consultations, this does not appear to be a routine spinal imaging procedure. There are indications suggesting potential for prompt surgical intervention or clinical findings of a serious condition affecting the spine. C7 spinous fracture is confirmed and reviewed from previous imaging as noted.

The observations and impressions noted regarding this case are strictly the opinions of this evaluator. This evaluation has been conducted only on the basis of the medical/chiropractic documentation provided. It is assumed that this data is true, correct, and is the most recent documentation available to the IRO at the time of request. If more information becomes available at a later date, an additional service/report or reconsideration may be requested. Such information may or may not change the opinions rendered in this review. This review and its findings are based solely on submitted materials. No clinical assessment or physical examination has been made by this office or this physician advisor concerning the above-mentioned claimant. These opinions rendered do not constitute a per se recommendation for specific claims or administrative functions to be made or enforced.

**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 (20 Tex. Admin. Code 142.5©).

**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 148.3).

This decision is deemed received by you 5 (five) days after it was mailed or the date of fax (28 Tex. Admin. Code 102.4(h) or 102.5(d)). A request for a 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

Or fax the request to (512) 804-4011. A copy of this decision must be attached to the request.

The party appealing the decision shall deliver a copy of its written request for a hearing to the opposing party involved in the dispute.

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 11th day of September 2003.