

BEFORE THE IOWA WORKERS' COMPENSATION COMMISSIONER

**FILED**

**MAY 13 2019**

**WORKERS' COMPENSATION**

REBECCA HONEYCUTT,

Claimant,

vs.

GENESIS DEVELOPMENT – QUALITY  
OF LIFE, INC.,

Employer,

and

UNITED HEARTLAND,

Insurance Carrier,  
Defendants.

File No. 5056073, 5033074

A P P E A L  
D E C I S I O N

Head Note No. 2501

On May 3, 2019, the Iowa Workers' Compensation Commissioner delegated authority to the undersigned to enter a final agency decision in this matter. Therefore, this appeal decision is entered as final agency action pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.15(3) and Iowa Code section 86.24.

Pursuant to Iowa Code section 86.24 and 17A.15, I affirm and adopt as the final agency decision those portions of the proposed arbitration and review-reopening decision filed on January 12, 2018 that relate to issues properly raised on intra-agency appeal with the following additional analysis and clarification:

In the review-reopening portion of the decision, the deputy commissioner held as follows with respect to claimant's claimed medical expenses:

Pursuant to the agreement for settlement approved May 15, 2013, the parties stipulated claimant sustained an injury to her low back, involving symptoms of her lumbar spine into the left leg. Also pursuant to the agreement for settlement, claimant remained entitled to ongoing medical care for this admitted low back condition. Claimant has continued to receive treatment for these complaints and accordingly, defendants are properly held responsible for past services rendered in treatment of these work-related conditions. Similarly and relatedly, defendants remain

responsible for ongoing medical care of claimant's causally related low back and left hip/lower extremity conditions.

(Review-Reopening Decision, p. 16) On appeal, claimant seeks clarification regarding which past medical expenses and future medical procedures are defendants' responsibility.

I will first address the medical expenses already incurred by claimant, as set forth in exhibit 16. These expenses are complicated by the fact that claimant was complaining of and receiving treatment for bilateral low back complaints during the timeframe identified in exhibit 16. As established in the arbitration decision and affirmed in this appeal, however, claimant failed to prove a causal connection between her right-sided complaints and her April 13, 2009 work injury. Thus, defendants cannot be held responsible for the medical expenses incurred by claimant for her unrelated right-sided complaints, including her right sacroiliac pain.

There is no specific breakdown of the bills between claimant's left-sided and right-sided complaints. It would be inequitable, however, for defendants to not be held responsible for the portion of the treatment relating to claimant's work-related left-sided low back and leg complaints.

I therefore conclude defendants are responsible for one half of the charges incurred for claimant's epidural steroid injections on November 7, 2014; February 20, 2015; and July 3, 2015. (Claimant's Exhibit 16, p. 111; see Cl. Ex. 1, pp. 21-22, 26) I likewise conclude defendants are responsible for one half of the charges incurred for claimant's outpatient office visits on October 15, 2015; December 11, 2015; and February 23, 2016. (Cl. Ex. 16, p. 111; see Cl. Ex. 1, p. 31, 37, 45) I was unable to locate medical records that correspond with the appointments on October 25, 2016 and February 10, 2017. However, if those appointments involved bilateral low back complaints, defendants are also responsible for one half of the charges incurred for those appointments.

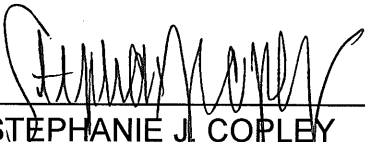
With respect to claimant's future medical expenses, defendants have been and continue to be responsible for procedures, injections, medications, and any other recommendations that are intended to treat claimant's ongoing left-sided low back and leg complaints, including her left sacroiliac joint. This is true irrespective of where any injections or other procedures are placed or located on the body so long as they are intended for treatment of claimant's left-sided low back and leg complaints, including her left sacroiliac pain.

ORDER

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the arbitration decision and review-reopening decision filed on January 12, 2018 is AFFIRMED in its entirety with the additional analysis and clarification as set forth above.

Claimant shall pay the costs of this appeal, including the preparation of the hearing transcript.

Signed and filed this 13<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2019.

  
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STEPHANIE J. COPLEY  
DEPUTY WORKERS' COMPENSATION  
COMMISSIONER

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