

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN
SOUTHERN DIVISION

DEBRA VALDES,

Plaintiff,

vs.

Case No. 09-10153

HONORABLE DENISE PAGE HOOD

COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL
SECURITY,

Defendant.

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ORDER ACCEPTING REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

This matter is before the Court on Magistrate Judge Donald A. Scheer's Report and Recommendation, dated December 31, 2009. Neither Defendant nor Plaintiff filed any objections to the Magistrate Judge's Report and Recommendation.

Judicial review of the Commissioner's decision is limited in scope to determining whether the findings of fact made by the Commissioner are supported by substantial evidence, and deciding whether the Commissioner employed the proper legal criteria in reaching his or her conclusion. *Garner v. Heckler*, 745 F. 2d 383 (6th Cir. 1984). The credibility findings of an administrative law judge ("ALJ") must not be discarded lightly and should be accorded great deference. *Hardaway v. Secretary of Health and Human Services*, 823 F. 2d 922, 928 (6th Cir. 1987). A district court's review of an ALJ's decision is not *de novo* review. The district court may not resolve conflicts in the evidence nor decide questions of credibility. *Garner*, 745 F. 2d at 397. The decision of the Commissioner must be upheld if supported by substantial evidence, even if the record might support

a contrary decision. *Smith v. Secretary of HHS*, 893 F. 2d 106, 108 (6th Cir. 1989). An administrative decision must be affirmed if supported by substantial evidence, even if the Court might arrive at a different conclusion. *Mullen v. Bowen*, 800 F. 2d 535, 545 (6th Cir. 1986) (quoting *Baker v. Heckler*, 730 F. 2d 1147, 1150 (8th Cir. 1984)).

The Magistrate Judge recommended that Defendant's Motion for Summary Judgment be granted and Plaintiff's Motion for Summary Judgment be denied. The Court has had an opportunity to review this matter and finds that the Magistrate Judge reached the correct conclusion for the proper reasons. The Court agrees with the Magistrate Judge that it was appropriate for ALJ to decline giving Plaintiff's treating physician, Dr. Douglas Benton's, opinion special weight because his opinion was not based on detailed, clinical, and diagnostic evidence. The Court also agrees with the Magistrate Judge that the ALJ included all work-related limitations and medical opinions in his residual functional capacity (RFC) evaluation and accurately concluded that Plaintiff retained the RFC for a restricted range of sedentary work prior to December 31, 2004. The Court agrees that although Plaintiff provided new medical evidence, it merely restated Plaintiff's ailments addressed in previous medical evidence on the record.

The Court agrees also with the Magistrate Judge that the ALJ's findings are consistent with the vocational expert's opinions, which came in response to proper hypothetical questions, which reflected Plaintiff's physical limitations and the medical record evidence of Plaintiff's physicians, as well as the daily activities Plaintiff testified to at the hearing. Lastly, the Court agrees that the ALJ's decision, which became the final decision of the Commissioner, is supported by substantial evidence and therefore reversal of the decision is unwarranted.

Accordingly,

IT IS ORDERED that Magistrate Judge Donald A. Scheer's Report and Recommendation [Docket No. 17, filed December 31, 2009] is ACCEPTED and ADOPTED as this Court's findings and conclusions of law.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Defendant's Motion for Summary Judgment [Docket No. 14, filed on August 19 2009] is GRANTED.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Plaintiff's Motion for Summary Judgment [Docket No. 11, filed on June 19, 2009] is DENIED.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this cause of action is dismissed.

S/Denise Page Hood
Denise Page Hood
United States District Judge

Dated: February 26, 2010

I hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing document was served upon counsel of record on February 26, 2010, by electronic and/or ordinary mail.

S/William F. Lewis
Case Manager