

Case Number:	CM13-0008310		
Date Assigned:	03/07/2014	Date of Injury:	05/13/2005
Decision Date:	04/16/2014	UR Denial Date:	07/16/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	08/07/2013

HOW THE IMR FINAL DETERMINATION WAS MADE

MAXIMUS Federal Services sent the complete case file to an expert reviewer. He/she has no affiliation with the employer, employee, providers or the claims administrator. The expert reviewer is Board Certified in Anesthesiology, has a subspecialty in Pain Management and is licensed to practice in California. He/she has been in active clinical practice for more than five years and is currently working at least 24 hours a week in active practice. The expert reviewer was selected based on his/her clinical experience, education, background, and expertise in the same or similar specialties that evaluate and/or treat the medical condition and disputed items/services. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

CLINICAL CASE SUMMARY

The expert reviewer developed the following clinical case summary based on a review of the case file, including all medical records:

According to the records made available for review, this is a 50-year-old female with a 5/13/05 date of injury. At the time of request for authorization for pharmacy purchase of Nucynta 75mg #180- 30 day supply, there is documentation of subjective (stable pain condition with medication) and objective (tenderness and spasm over the lumbar spine, positive straight leg raise, decreased lower extremities strength, and decreased sensation in the S1 dermatome) findings, current diagnoses (lumbar radiculopathy and lumbar stenosis), and treatment to date (medications (including ongoing Nucynta for greater than three months). Report identifies that patient gave verbal understanding of benefits, possible side effects, and agreed to be compliant to medication usage. There is no documentation of Nucynta used as a second line therapy for patient who has developed intolerable adverse effects with first line opioids.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

The Final Determination was based on decisions for the disputed items/services set forth below:

PHARMACY PURCHASE OF NUCYNTA 75MG #180- 30 DAY SUPPLY: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ODG Pain Chapter, Tapentadol (Nucynta)

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Opioids, pages 74-80 and the Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain, Tapentadol (Nucynta)

Decision rationale: MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines necessitate documentation that the prescriptions are from a single practitioner and are taken as directed; the lowest possible dose is being prescribed; and there will be ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects, as criteria necessary to support the medical necessity of Opioids. ODG identifies documentation of Nucynta used as a second line therapy for patients who develop intolerable adverse effects with first line opioids, as criteria necessary to support the medical necessity of Nucynta. Within the medical information available for review, there is documentation of diagnoses of lumbar radiculopathy and lumbar stenosis. In addition, there is documentation that the prescriptions are from a single practitioner and are taken as directed; the lowest possible dose is being prescribed; and there will be ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects. However, there is no documentation of Nucynta used as a second line therapy for patient who has developed intolerable adverse effects with first line opioids. Therefore, based on guidelines and a review of the evidence, the request for pharmacy purchase of Nucynta 75mg #180- 30 day supply is not medically necessary.