MAXIMUS Federal Services

| Case Number: | CM13-0024216 | | |
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| Date Assigned: | 11/20/2013 | Date of Injury: | 01/03/2001 |
| Decision Date: | 01/15/2014 | UR Denial Date: | 09/03/2013 |
| Priority: | Standard | Application Received: | 09/13/2013 |

## HOW THE IMR FINAL DETERMINATION WAS MADE

MAXIMUS Federal Services sent the complete case file to a physician reviewer. He/she has no affiliation with the employer, employee, providers or the claims administrator. The physician reviewer is Board Certified in Occupational Medicine, 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 physician 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:

The applicant is a represented [redacted] employee who has filed a claim for chronic low back pain reportedly associated with cumulative trauma at work first claimed on January 3, 2001. Thus far, the applicant has been treated with the following: Analgesic medications; transfer of care to and from various providers in various specialties; attorney representation; psychological counseling; prior lumbar fusion surgery, prior cervical laminectomy surgery; and extensive periods of time off of work, on total temporary disability. In a utilization review report of September 3, 2013, the claims administrator conditionally non-certified a request for urinalysis performed on March 19, 2012. The applicant's attorney later appealed, on September 13, 2013. A progress note on file which is closest in temporal proximity to the date of service is a letter of September 28, 2012, in which the attending provider states that the claimant has not worked since November 15, 2003. Urine drug screening was ordered to monitor the claimant's dosages of analgesics, it was suggested. It is noted that later urine drug testing on December 12, 2012, apparently tested for 50 different metabolites and was notable for the presence of quantitative testing.

## IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Retrospective request for 1 urinalysis drug screening between 3/19/2012 and 3/19/2012:**
Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 43. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Chronic Pain Chapter.

**Decision rationale:** While page 43 of MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines does endorse intermittent urine drug testing in the chronic pain population, the MTUS does not establish specific parameters for or identify a frequency with which to perform urine drug testing. As noted in the ODG Chronic Pain Chapter, urine drug testing topic, an attending provider should clearly furnish a list of drug tests and/or drug panels which he intends to test for along with the request for authorization. The attending provider should clearly document the claimant's medication list and/or medication profile prior to submitting a request for authorization. ODG also suggests employing the best practices of the Department of Transportation (DOT) as the most legally defensible framework for performing drug testing. In this case, the claimant meets none of the aforementioned criteria. It is further noted that ODG notes that quantitative drug testing should not be performed without evidence of necessity. In this case, the attending provider did seemingly perform quantitative testing, as suggested by later drug screening of December 12, 2012. For all of these reasons, then, the request is not certified as it does not appear that the attending provider's manner performing drug testing conforms to the ODG guidelines here.