

Case Number:	CM13-0034076		
Date Assigned:	12/06/2013	Date of Injury:	07/18/2012
Decision Date:	02/07/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/03/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/11/2013

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 Psychiatry, 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.

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 patient is a 25-year old female with a history of low back pain with intermittent radicular symptoms into the legs. She has a history of what appears to be symptomatic lumbar disc disease at L4-L5 and L5-S1. She injured her lower back at work July 2012. She has been treated with Lexapro. [REDACTED] noted that the consultation/referral was made for alleged stress, anxiety, and depression related to a "back sprain/strain" The issue under review is Lexapro 10 mg #30.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

LEXAPRO 10 MG #30: Overturned

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): 107.

Decision rationale: The Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines 8 C.C.R. §§9792.20 - 9792.26 CA MTUS (Effective July 18, 2009) on Page 107 of 127 address the use of SSRI medications as follows: "Not recommended as a treatment for chronic pain, but SSRIs may have a role in treating secondary depression. Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), a class of antidepressants that inhibit serotonin reuptake without action on noradrenalin, are controversial based on controlled trials. It has been suggested that the main role of SSRIs may be in addressing psychological symptoms associated with chronic pain. More information is needed regarding the

role of SSRIs and pain. SSRIs have not been shown to be effective for low back pain. See Antidepressants for chronic pain for general guidelines, as well as specific SSRI listing for more information and references" In the present case the patient had well documented depression and anxiety symptoms. Psychiatric medications often take many months to work. The patient is tolerating the Lexapro whereas she had a bad reaction to Cymbalta. Lexapro appears effective for her and is medically necessary per guidelines cited above.