MAXIMUS Federal Services

Case Number:	CM13-0044836		
Date Assigned:	12/27/2013	Date of Injury:	01/28/1997
Decision Date:	02/19/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/23/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/29/2013

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 Internal Medicine and is licensed to practice in New York. 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 patient is a 51 year old male with a date of injury of 1/28/97. His diagnoses include depression, ulcers, hypertension, lumbosacral degenerative disc disease and chronic pain syndrome. The patient has had lumbar facet joint injections in 2011. An intrathecal pump was placed 2006. On a visit to an MD 10/21/13, the patient complained of pain on a scale of 5-7/10. A request for Morphine, Viagra and Lunesta was denied by UR 10/23/13.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Lunesta 3mg: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation the Medical Letters on Drugs and Therapeutics, "Eszopiclone: a new hypnotic", 2005 Feb 28;47(1203):17-9.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation the Physician's Desk Reference (PDR).

Decision rationale: Per the PDR, Lunesta is indicated for the treatment of insomnia. The clinical trials performed in support of efficacy were up to 6 months in duration. The patient has been on this medicine, since at least 11/12. Due to this long term use, the continued use of the drug is not recommended.

Viagra 100mg: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation its decision on information from MDConsult.com.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation based his/her decision on the PDR.

Decision rationale: Per the PDR, Viagra is used in the treatment of erectile dysfunction (ED). It has the potential for cardiac risk of sexual activity in patients with cardiovascular disease (CVD). There appears to be no indication in the records as to whether the medication is working, and that the benefits outweigh any risks.

Morphine sulfate 15mg: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 80-81.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines.

Decision rationale: Per MTUS guidelines, opioid use for chronic back pain appears to be efficacious but limited for short-term pain relief, and long term efficacy is unclear (>16 weeks), but also appears limited. It states that opioids may be continued if the patient has returned to work or has improved functioning and pain. Annals (2007) reported that there is no evidence that opioids showed long term benefit or improvement in function when used as treatment for chronic back pain. The patient has been on Morphine since at least 1/13. There does not appear to be any record noted of functional improvement with the opioid use. Based on the above, the medicine remains non-certified.