MAXIMUS Federal Services

Case Number:	CM13-0054088		
Date Assigned:	02/26/2014	Date of Injury:	09/13/2003
Decision Date:	05/23/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/29/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/07/2013

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 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 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:

The applicant is a represented [redacted] employee who has filed a claim for diabetes mellitus, hypertension, diastolic dysfunction, and dyslipidemia reportedly associated with an industrial injury of September 13, 2003. Portions of the applicant's claim have apparently been administratively contested by the claims administrator. In a utilization review report of October 29, 2013, the claims administrator apparently certified a blood pressure monitor rental, non-certified Victoza, and only partially certified diabetic test strips and lancets, citing [redacted] policies on durable medical equipment. No rationale for the partial certification for the diabetic test strips and lancets was provided. The claims administrator denied Victoza on the grounds that he did not believe this was an appropriate choice in the individuals with pancreatitis, such as the applicant. The applicant's attorney subsequently appealed. A clinical progress note of May 29, 2012 is notable for comments that the applicant did carry diagnoses of diabetes, hypertension, and dyslipidemia. The applicant was on Norvasc, Zestril, Metformin, Glipizide, Lipitor, Victoza and Asprin at that point in time.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

VICTOZA PEN WITH NEEDLES, ONE MONTH SUPPLY, WITH 2 REFILLS: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation DRUGS.COM

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation PHARMACY AND THERAPEUTICS, VICTOZA MEDICATION GUIDE.

Decision rationale: The MTUS does not address the topic. As noted in the Pharmacy and Therapeutic article on Victoza, there is no conclusive evidence of linking Victoza with development of pancreatitis. However, the article goes on to note that if any pancreatitis develops in individuals during the course of Victoza therapy, it is recommended that the Victoza not be started after the problem has resolved. In this case, the applicant did reportedly develop pancreatitis while using Victoza, per the claims administrator. Restarting the same does not appear to be indicated. Therefore, the request is not medically necessary and appropriate.

DIABETIC TEST STRIPS/LANCETS/ALCOHOL SWABS, ONE MONTH SUPPLY WITH TWO REFILLS: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Blue Cross of California Medical Policy Durable Medical Equipment CG-DME-10, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION, DIABETES CARE, THE ECONOMIC COST OF DIABETES: IS IT TIME FOR A NEW TREATMENT PARADIGM? WILLIAM HERMAN, M.D., ET AL.

Decision rationale: The MTUS does not address the topic. As noted in the diabetes care article, increasing access to care, including self management, education, nutritional counseling, and ensuring access to necessary treatment and supplies is "critical." In this case, the diabetic test strips, lancets, and alcohol swabs are part and parcel of self-care for diabetics. Provision of these supplies is, as suggested by the literature, critical. Therefore, the request is medically necessary and appropriate.