

Case Number:	CM13-0063559		
Date Assigned:	12/30/2013	Date of Injury:	10/15/2006
Decision Date:	03/24/2014	UR Denial Date:	11/15/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	12/09/2013

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:

According to the medical records provided for review, this is a 49-year-old female with a 10/15/06 date of injury. At the time of request for authorization for Kadian 50 mg tabs 90 and Norco 10/325mg tabs 90, there is documentation of subjective (chronic upper extremity neuropathic pain) and objective (shiny skin, tenderness of bilateral hands and fingers with swelling and restricted range of motion, hypersensitivity, and inability to hold on to objects firmly) findings, current diagnoses (complex regional pain syndrome), and treatment to date (Kadian and Norco for several years, Lyrica, and Percocet). Report indicates the medications decrease the patient's pain level and provide functional gains. There is also documentation of an opioid contract. Regarding the requested Kadian 50 mg tabs 90, there is no documentation of failure of non-opioid analgesics, short-acting opioid analgesics, and a trial of generic extended-release morphine (equivalent to MS Contin). Regarding the requested Norco 10/325mg tabs 90, there is no documentation of short-term treatment with opioids.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Kadian 50mg tabs 90: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 11 Forearm, Wrist, and Hand Complaints, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids
Page(s): 74-80, 93.

Decision rationale: The MTUS Chronic Pain Guidelines state that controlled, extended and sustained release preparations of Morphine sulphate should be reserved for patients with chronic pain, who are in need of continuous treatment. In addition, MTUS Chronic Pain Guidelines identify documentation that the prescriptions are from a single practitioner and are taken as directed, that the lowest possible dose is being prescribed, and that 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 Kadian (Morphine Sulfate). The Official Disability Guidelines state Kadian is recommended for a trial after failure of non-opioid analgesics, short-acting opioid analgesics and after a trial of generic extended-release morphine (equivalent to MS Contin). Within the medical information available for review, there is documentation of a diagnosis of complex regional pain syndrome. In addition, there is documentation of chronic pain and records reflecting ongoing use with Kadian for several years with functional benefit. Furthermore, given documentation of an opioid contract, 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 failure of non-opioid analgesics, short-acting opioid analgesics, and a trial of generic extended-release morphine (equivalent to MS Contin). Therefore, based on guidelines and a review of the evidence, the request for Kadian 50 mg tabs 90 is not medically necessary and appropriate.

Norco 10/325mg tabs 90: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 11 Forearm, Wrist, and Hand Complaints, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids
Page(s): 74-80.

Decision rationale: MTUS Chronic Pain Guidelines indicate 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 Norco. In addition, MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines indicate that opioids for chronic pain appear to be efficacious but limited for short-term pain relief, and long-term efficacy is unclear (>16 weeks), but also appears limited, as criteria necessary to support the medical necessity of Norco. Within the medical information available for review, there is documentation of a diagnosis of complex regional pain syndrome. In addition, there is documentation of chronic pain and records reflecting ongoing use with Norco for several years with functional benefit. Furthermore, given documentation of an opioid contract, 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, given documentation of treatment with Norco for several years, there is no documentation of short-term treatment with opioids. Therefore, based on guidelines and a review of the evidence, the request for Norco 10/325mg tabs 90 is not medically necessary.