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| <b>Case Number:</b>   | CM13-0069019 |                              |            |
| <b>Date Assigned:</b> | 01/03/2014   | <b>Date of Injury:</b>       | 02/16/2011 |
| <b>Decision Date:</b> | 05/23/2014   | <b>UR Denial Date:</b>       | 11/26/2013 |
| <b>Priority:</b>      | Standard     | <b>Application Received:</b> | 12/20/2013 |

### 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:

According to the records made available for review, this is a 62-year-old female with a 2/16/11 date of injury. A request for authorization for hydrocodone/acetaminophen 5/325 mg #60 was made on November 26, 2013. At this time, there was documentation of subjective (pain at the base of the neck radiating into the shoulders) and objective (very guarded with neck active range of motion, moderate pain at extremes of motion) findings, current diagnoses (sprain of neck and thoracic), and treatment to date (PT and medications (Motrin and Vicoprofen). There is no documentation that the prescriptions are from a single practitioner and are taken as directed; that the lowest possible dose is being prescribed; that there will be ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects and functional benefit or improvement as a reduction in work restrictions; an increase in activity tolerance; and/or a reduction in the use of medications or medical services as a result of hydrocodone/acetaminophen 5/325 mg use to date.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**HYDROCODONE-ACETAMINOPHEN 5/325 MG # 60:** 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 Opioids  
Page(s): 74-80.

**Decision rationale:** The Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines necessitate 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 opioids. MTUS-Definitions identifies that any treatment intervention should not be continued in the absence of functional benefit or improvement as a reduction in work restrictions; an increase in activity tolerance; and/or a reduction in the use of medications or medical services. Within the medical information available for review, there is documentation of diagnosis of sprain of neck and thoracic. However, there is no documentation that the prescriptions are from a single practitioner and are taken as directed; that the lowest possible dose is being prescribed; that there will be ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects and functional benefit or improvement as a reduction in work restrictions; an increase in activity tolerance; and/or a reduction in the use of medications or medical services as a result of hydrocodone/acetaminophen 5/325 mg use to date. Therefore, based on guidelines and a review of the evidence, the request for hydrocodone/acetaminophen 5/325 mg #60 is not medically necessary.