

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0016627		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	04/11/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	05/23/1997
<b>Decision Date:</b>	05/28/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	01/07/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	02/10/2014

### 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 Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, has a subspecialty in Pain Management 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:

This is a patient with a date of injury of 5/23/97. A utilization review determination dated 1/7/14 recommends non-certification of Vicodin. 12/11/13 medical report identifies low back pain and neck pain. On exam, there is cervical muscle spasm and tenderness, crepitus, and limited Range of Motion (ROM). Lumbar spine exam revealed muscle spasm, tightness, limited ROM, and a somewhat flexed forward posture. Sensation is decreased on the top of both feet. There is altered sensation to both anterior lateral thighs and knees.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

#### **VICODIN #90 FOR THE LUMBAR SPINE:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines Workers Compensation Drug Formulary, Goodman And Gilman's The Pharmacological Basis Of Therapeutics, 12th Edition. Mcgraw Hill, 2006, www.online.epocrates.com, monthly prescribing reference, www.empr.com.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation (ODG) Official Disability Guidelines, Goodman and Gillman's The Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics, 11th Edition. McGraw Hill, 2006. Physician's Desk Reference. 68th Edition. www.RxList.com. \*(ODG) Official Disability

Guidelines Workers Compensation Drug Formulary, [www.odg-twc.com/odgtwc/formulary.htm](http://www.odg-twc.com/odgtwc/formulary.htm) -  
drugs.com \*Epocrates Online, [www.online.epocrates.com](http://www.online.epocrates.com)- Monthly Prescribing Reference,  
[www.empr.com](http://www.empr.com)- Opioid Dose Calculator - AMDD Agency Medical Directors' G Group Dose  
Calculator, [www.agency.meddirectors.wa.gov](http://www.agency.meddirectors.wa.gov).

**Decision rationale:** Regarding the request for Vicodin, California MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines state that, due to high abuse potential, close follow-up is recommended with documentation of analgesic effect, objective functional improvement, side effects, and discussion regarding any aberrant use. Guidelines go on to recommend discontinuing opioids if there is no documentation of improved function and pain. Within the documentation available for review, there is no indication that the medication is improving the patient's function or pain (in terms of percent reduction in pain or reduced NRS), no documentation regarding side effects, and no discussion regarding aberrant use. Opioids should not be abruptly discontinued; however, unfortunately, there is no provision for modification of the current request. In light of the above issues, the currently requested Vicodin is not medically necessary.