

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0113080		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	08/01/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	11/20/1994
<b>Decision Date:</b>	09/09/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	06/27/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	07/17/2014

### 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, 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 injured worker is a 64-year-old female who reported an injury on 11/20/1994. The mechanism of injury was not provided. On 05/02/2014, the injured worker presented with bilateral knee and left ankle pain. Upon examination there was tenderness and a swollen left lateral ankle, +1 medial collateral ligament laxity and a bilateral knee with no swelling. X-rays revealed total knee replacements. The diagnoses were bilateral painful total knee replacements, cervical/thoracic/lumbar strain and pain management problems. Prior therapy included surgery and medications. The provider recommended Norco 10/325 mg. The provider's rationale was not provided. The Request for Authorization form was not included in the medical documents for review.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Norco 10/325mg #120:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids, Criteria for use Page(s): page(s) 78.

**Decision rationale:** The request for Norco 10/325 mg with a quantity of 120 is non-certified. The California MTUS recommends the use of opioids for ongoing management of chronic pain. The guidelines recommend ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use and side effects should be evident. There is lack of evidence of objective assessment of the injured worker's pain level, functional status, evaluation of risk for aberrant drug abuse behavior and side effects. The efficacy of the prior use of Norco was not provided. Additionally, the provider's request does not indicate the frequency of the medication in the request as submitted. As such, the request is non-certified.