

Case Number:	CM14-0121905		
Date Assigned:	08/06/2014	Date of Injury:	06/21/2006
Decision Date:	10/01/2014	UR Denial Date:	07/02/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	08/01/2014

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 Texas. 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:

Medical records reflect the claimant is a 72 year old male who sustained a work injury on 6-21-06. The claimant is status post lumbar surgery. He has also been treated with trigger point injections and is currently treated with medications. Office visit on 6-10-14 notes the claimant has chronic pain in his cervical and lumbar spine. On exam, the claimant has decreased spasms and tenderness at the lumbar spine and cervical spine. He has decreased range of motion of the lumbar spine.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Relafen 750mg #60: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAIDs Page(s): 68.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAIDs Page(s): 67-73. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain chapter - NSAID's

Decision rationale: Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines as well as ODG reflect that NSAIDs are recommended at the lowest dose for the shortest period in patients with moderate to severe pain. There is an absence in documentation documenting medical necessity for the long

term use of an NSAID. There is no documentation of functional improvement with this medication. Therefore, the medical necessity of this request is not established.

Neurontin 200mg #60: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Antiepilepsy Drugs (AEDs) Neuropathic Pain Page(s): 16-22.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines antiepilepsy drugs Page(s): 16-22. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) pain chapter - anti epilepsy drugs

Decision rationale: Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines as well as ODG reflect that anti-epileptics are recommended for neuropathic pain. There is an absence in documentation noting that this claimant has objective findings of radiculopathy on exam or that he has neuropathy. Therefore, the medical necessity of this request is not established.

Voltaren Gel 1% #1: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111-113. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain Chapter - topical NSAIDs

Decision rationale: Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines notes that topical analgesics are largely experimental in use with few randomized controlled trials to determine efficacy or safety. Primarily recommended for neuropathic pain when trials of antidepressants and anticonvulsants have failed. There is an absence in documentation noting that this claimant failed first line of treatment or that he cannot tolerate the oral medications that are being prescribed. Additionally, duplication in NSAIDs is not indicated. Therefore, the medical necessity of this request was not established.

Flector Patches #30: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Medications Page(s): 111.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111-113. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain Chapter - topical NSAIDs

Decision rationale: Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines notes that topical analgesics are largely experimental in use with few randomized controlled trials to determine efficacy or safety. Primarily recommended for neuropathic pain when trials of antidepressants and

anticonvulsants have failed. There is an absence in documentation noting that this claimant failed first line of treatment or that he cannot tolerate the oral medications that are being prescribed. Therefore, the medical necessity of this request was not established.

Tramadol ER 100mg #30: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Weaning of Medications Page(s): 91.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Tramadol Page(s): 113. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain chapter - tramadol

Decision rationale: Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines as well as ODG notes that ongoing use of opioids require ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects. Pain assessment should include: current pain; the least reported pain over the period since last assessment; average pain; intensity of pain after taking the opioid; how long it takes for pain relief; and how long pain relief lasts. Satisfactory response to treatment may be indicated by the patient's decreased pain, increased level of function, or improved quality of life. Information from family members or other caregivers should be considered in determining the patient's response to treatment. The 4 A's for Ongoing Monitoring: Four domains have been proposed as most relevant for ongoing monitoring of chronic pain patients on opioids: pain relief, side effects, physical and psychosocial functioning, and the occurrence of any potentially aberrant (or nonadherent) drug-related behaviors. These domains have been summarized as the "4 A's" (analgesia, activities of daily living, adverse side effects, and aberrant drug-taking behaviors). There is an absence in documentation noting that the claimant has functional improvement with this medication. Quantification of improvement, if any, or any documentation that this medication improves psychosocial functioning. Therefore, the medical necessity of this request is not established.