

Case Number:	CM14-0123036		
Date Assigned:	08/06/2014	Date of Injury:	07/31/2009
Decision Date:	11/17/2014	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 Anesthesiology, 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:

According to the records made available for review, this is a 56-year-old male with a 7/31/09 date of injury, and posterior cervical laminectomy in 2009 and anterior cervical discectomy and fusion in 2011. At the time (7/2/09) of the Decision for Fentanyl Patch 100mg #10, there is documentation of subjective (severe neck pain radiating to trapezius and arms) and objective (tenderness over the cervical and lumbar paraspinals with muscle spasm, positive straight leg raising test, and dysesthesias in the upper extremities) findings, current diagnoses (brachial neuritis or radiculitis), and treatment to date (medications (including ongoing treatment with Fentanyl patch since at least 1/10/13). 6/19/14 medical report identifies that medications enable the patient to perform activities of daily living. There is no documentation of persistent, moderate to severe chronic pain that requires continuous, around-the-clock opioid administration for an extended period of time, and cannot be managed by other means; that the patient is already receiving opioid therapy, has demonstrated opioid tolerance, and requires a total daily dose at least equivalent to Fentanyl 25 mcg/h; and no contraindications exist.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Fentanyl Patch 100mg #10: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Fentanyl Transdermal (Duragesic; Generic Available)Opioids.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Duragesic (fentanyl transdermal system) Page(s): 44. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain, Duragesic and Fentanyl Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence: Title 8, California Code of Regulations, Section 9792.20; and FDA

Decision rationale: MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines identifies documentation of chronic pain in patients who require continuous opioid analgesia for pain that cannot be managed by other means, as criteria necessary to support the medical necessity of Fentanyl. MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines identifies that Fentanyl is not recommended as first-line therapy. 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. ODG identifies documentation that Fentanyl is not for use in routine musculoskeletal pain. FDA identifies documentation of persistent, moderate to severe chronic pain that requires continuous, around-the-clock opioid administration for an extended period of time, and cannot be managed by other means; that the patient is already receiving opioid therapy, has demonstrated opioid tolerance, and requires a total daily dose at least equivalent to Fentanyl 25 mcg/h; and no contraindications exist, as criteria necessary to support the medical necessity of Fentanyl patch. Within the medical information available for review, there is documentation of a diagnosis of brachial neuritis or radiculitis. In addition, there is documentation of ongoing treatment with Fentanyl Patch. Furthermore, given documentation that Fentanyl patch enables the patient to perform activities of daily living, there is documentation of functional benefit and improvement as an increase in activity tolerance as a result of Fentanyl patch use to date. However, despite documentation of pain, there is no documentation of persistent, moderate to severe chronic pain that requires continuous, around-the-clock opioid administration for an extended period of time, and cannot be managed by other means; that the patient is already receiving opioid therapy, has demonstrated opioid tolerance, and requires a total daily dose at least equivalent to Fentanyl 25 mcg/h; and no contraindications exist. Therefore, based on guidelines and a review of the evidence, the request for Fentanyl Patch 100mg #10 is not medically necessary.