

Case Number:	CM14-0127439		
Date Assigned:	08/15/2014	Date of Injury:	01/29/2012
Decision Date:	10/16/2014	UR Denial Date:	07/16/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	08/12/2014

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 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:

Patient is a 32-year-old with date of injury January 29, 2012. The medical document associated with the request for authorization, a primary treating physician's progress report, dated June 19, 2014, lists subjective complaints as pain in the low back. Objective findings: Examination of the lumbar spine revealed tenderness to palpation of the paravertebral muscles. Range of motion was decreased in all planes due to pain. Diagnosis: 1. Rule out intrinsic bilateral hip joint disorder 2. Chronic low back and right lower extremity pain 3. Chronic headaches 4. History of wrist and dorsal hand injury. The medical records supplied for review document that the patient has been taking the following medications for at least as far back as two months.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Ambien: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation OFFICIAL DISABILITY GUIDELINES

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain (Chronic), Zolpidem (Ambien®)

Decision rationale: The Official Disability Guidelines do not recommend the use of sleeping pills for long-term use. While sleeping pills, so-called minor tranquilizers, and anti-anxiety agents are commonly prescribed in chronic pain, pain specialists rarely, if ever, recommend them for long-term use. They can be habit-forming, and they may impair function and memory more than opioid pain relievers. There is also concern that they may increase pain and depression over the long-term. The patient has been taking Ambien for longer than the two to six week period recommended by the ODG. Therefore, the request for Ambien is not medically necessary or appropriate.