

Case Number:	CM14-0130551		
Date Assigned:	08/20/2014	Date of Injury:	01/25/2012
Decision Date:	11/14/2014	UR Denial Date:	08/08/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	08/15/2014

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 & Rehabilitation and is licensed to practice in Alabama, Maryland and New York. 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 59 year old female with an injury on 1/25/2012 after being involved in a motor vehicle accident with cervical pain. There is a request for 240 tablets of norco which is being questioned here.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Norco 5/325 mg #240 (2 month supply) retro 7/22/14: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines.

Decision rationale: The CA MTUS CPMT guidelines indicate Norco to be indicated for moderate to severe pain. Discontinuation of opioids is indicated if there is no overall improvement in function and only to be continued if patient's symptoms and functionality is improving. It is important to note that it is indicated to wean off of Norco rather than sudden abruptness of the medication. Based on the medical records available for review for me, patient has not had any significant improvement since start of the medication. Therefore, Norco has been ineffective for the patient overall. The request should be modified to a lesser quantity only for weaning purposes. Therefore, this request is not medically necessary.

