

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0131014		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	08/20/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	07/11/2007
<b>Decision Date:</b>	09/29/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	08/08/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	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 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 52-year-old male with a 7/11/07 date of injury. At the time (7/24/14) of request for authorization for Norco 7.5/325mg #90, there is documentation of subjective (moderate to severe low back pain radiating to the left buttock and hip area; and chronic right shoulder pain) and objective (decreased lumbar range of motion, absent Achilles reflex, decreased patellar reflexes, decreased sensation over the left lateral calf and bottom of the foot, limping gait, and positive Faber's maneuver; right shoulder limited range of motion with positive impingement sign) findings, current diagnoses (lumbosacral sprain/strain with lumbar degenerative joint disease and radicular symptoms, bilateral hip pain, and history of right shoulder girdle sprain/strain with chronic tendinopathy and limited range of motion), and treatment to date (ongoing therapy with Noroc since at least 2/21/12 with increased functioning). In addition, medical report identifies a narcotic contract.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Norco 7.5/325mg #90:** Overturned

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids, specific drug list.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids  
Page(s): 74-80.

**Decision rationale:** The MTUS Chronic Pain Guidelines necessitate documentation that the prescriptions are from a single practitioner and are taken as directed; the lowest possible dose is being prescribed; and there will be ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects, as criteria necessary to support the medical necessity of opioids. Within the medical information available for review, there is documentation of diagnoses of lumbosacral sprain/strain with lumbar degenerative joint disease and radicular symptoms, bilateral hip pain, and history of right shoulder girdle sprain/strain with chronic tendinopathy and limited range of motion. In addition, given documentation of a narcotic contract, there is documentation that the prescriptions are from a single practitioner and are taken as directed; the lowest possible dose is being prescribed; and there will be ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects. Furthermore, given documentation of ongoing treatment with Norco with increased functioning, there is documentation of functional benefit or improvement as an increase in activity tolerance a result of use of Norco. Therefore, based on guidelines and a review of the evidence, the request for Norco 7.5/325mg #90 is medically necessary.