

Case Number:	CM14-0151990		
Date Assigned:	10/16/2014	Date of Injury:	11/16/2008
Decision Date:	11/19/2014	UR Denial Date:	09/09/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/17/2014

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 Neurology, has a subspecialty in Neuromuscular Medicine and is licensed to practice in New Jersey. 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:

The patient is a 68-year-old man who sustained a work-related injury on November 16, 2008. Subsequently, he developed with chronic neck and back pain. According to a progress report dated on June 27, 2014, the patient was reported to have continuous neck and back pain. The pain severity was rated as 6/10 with some efficacy of icing and medications. Physical examination demonstrated painful neck extension, lumbar tenderness with reduced range of motion, mild reduction of muscle strength in both upper extremities and tenderness over the right shoulder. The patient was treated with the OxyContin and oxycodone with some help with pain severity. The provider requested authorization to continue using OxyContin.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Oxycontin (Oxycodone Hydrochloride Controlled-Release) tab 30mg #60: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 75-81.

Decision rationale: According to MTUS guidelines, Oxycodone as well as other short acting opioids are indicated for intermittent or breakthrough pain (page 75). It can be used in acute pot

operative pain. It is not recommended for chronic pain of long-term use as prescribed in this case. In addition and according to MTUS guidelines, ongoing use of opioids should follow specific rules: "(a) Prescriptions from a single practitioner taken as directed, and all prescriptions from a single pharmacy. (b) The lowest possible dose should be prescribed to improve pain and function. (c) Office: 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 non-adherent) 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). The monitoring of these outcomes over time should affect therapeutic decisions and provide a framework." Based on the patient chart, there is no clear rationale behind the continuous use of opioids. There is no clear documentation of pain and functional improvement with Oxycontin. There is no documentation of compliance of the patient with pain medications, of breakthrough pain or of the use of other pain control modalities, such as behavioral therapies. Therefore, the prescription of Oxycontin (Oxycodone Hydrochloride Controlled-Release) tab 30mg #60 is not medically necessary at this time.