

Case Number:	CM14-0157534		
Date Assigned:	09/30/2014	Date of Injury:	05/09/2001
Decision Date:	10/28/2014	UR Denial Date:	09/03/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/25/2014

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 Family 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:

54 year old female had a date of injury 5/9/01. Patient injured her lower back on the left side and left leg while picking up chunks of concrete. Patient had a CT lumbar spine on 11/16/2012 which showed minimal disc bulge at lumbar spine at L5/S1 and a neurotransmitter in place. Diagnosis includes complex regional pain syndrome. Patient has been taking Vicodin, baclofen, Lexapro, promethazine, fentanyl patches gabitril and lunesta. Patient had morphine pump insertions. Patient has also underwent chiropractic sessions. On an exam note dated 5/29/13 treating physician noted all the narcotics patient has been taking were alarming and probably related to many of her complaints including depression, nausea, vomiting and headaches.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Demerol 100mg #90: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Demerol Page(s): 60-61.

Decision rationale: According to medical guidelines it states that Demerol is not recommended for chronic pain control. Only one medication should be given at a time, and interventions that

are active and passive should remain unchanged at the time of the medication change. According to the patient's medical records it is clearly stated by the treating physician that the patient is not benefiting from the numerous pain medications and has narcotic dependency and addiction. The patient has been on numerous narcotics for long periods of time which is not benefitting the patient and not recommended by guidelines. Based on this Demerol is not medically necessary.

Valium 10mg #90: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Benzodiazepines Page(s): 24.

Decision rationale: According to guidelines Benzodiazepines which include Valium are Not recommended for long-term use because long-term efficacy is unproven and there is a risk of dependence. Most guidelines limit use to 4 weeks. Their range of action includes sedative/hypnotic, anxiolytic, anticonvulsant, and muscle relaxant. Chronic benzodiazepines are the treatment of choice in very few conditions. Tolerance to hypnotic effects develops rapidly. Tolerance to anxiolytic effects occurs within months and long-term use may actually increase anxiety. A more appropriate treatment for anxiety disorder is an antidepressant. Tolerance to anticonvulsant and muscle relaxant effects occurs within weeks. Based on the patient's medical records again it is stated the patient has already become dependent on narcotic pain medications and has formed an addiction. Based on this alone Valium is not medically necessary.