

Case Number:	CM14-0158683		
Date Assigned:	10/02/2014	Date of Injury:	09/12/2008
Decision Date:	10/30/2014	UR Denial Date:	09/23/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/26/2014

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 and Rehabilitation, 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:

This is a male patient with the date of injury of September 12, 2008. A Utilization Review was performed on September 23, 2014 and recommended non-certification of Morphine sulfate 60mg ER per 9/12/14 and Morphine Sulfate IR 30mg, per 9/12/14 form. A visit note dated September 12, 2014 identifies Complaints of right shoulder pain that radiates to the neck. An examination identifies right shoulder movements are restricted, limited by pain. Tenderness is noted in the acromioclavicular joint, biceps groove, coracoid process, and subdeltoid bursa. The diagnoses identify arthropathy not otherwise specified of shoulder and pain in joint of shoulder. Prescriptions identify refill Morphine Sulfate IR 30 mg tab.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

MORPHINE SULFATE 60MG ER #60: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines OPIOIDS Page(s): 78-80, 124, 93.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 44, 47, 75-79, 120.

Decision rationale: Regarding the request for Morphine sulfate, California Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines state that Morphine sulfate is an opiate pain medication. Due to high abuse

potential, close follow-up is recommended with documentation of analgesic effect, objective functional improvement, side effects, and discussion regarding any aberrant use. Guidelines go on to recommend discontinuing opioids if there is no documentation of improved function and pain. Within the documentation available for review, there is no indication that the medication is improving the patient's function or pain (in terms of specific examples of functional improvement and percent reduction in pain or reduced NRS), no documentation regarding side effects, and no discussion regarding aberrant use. As such, there is no clear indication for ongoing use of the medication. Opioids should not be abruptly discontinued, but unfortunately, there is no provision to modify the current request to allow tapering. In light of the above issues, the currently requested Morphine sulfate is not medically necessary.

MORPHINE SULFATE IR 30MG #180: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines OPIOIDS Page(s): 78-80, 124, 93.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 44, 47, 75-79, 120.

Decision rationale: Regarding the request for Morphine sulfate, California Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines state that Morphine sulfate is an opiate pain medication. Due to high abuse potential, close follow-up is recommended with documentation of analgesic effect, objective functional improvement, side effects, and discussion regarding any aberrant use. Guidelines go on to recommend discontinuing opioids if there is no documentation of improved function and pain. Within the documentation available for review, there is no indication that the medication is improving the patient's function or pain (in terms of specific examples of functional improvement and percent reduction in pain or reduced NRS), no documentation regarding side effects, and no discussion regarding aberrant use. As such, there is no clear indication for ongoing use of the medication. Opioids should not be abruptly discontinued, but unfortunately, there is no provision to modify the current request to allow tapering. In light of the above issues, the currently requested Morphine sulfate is not medically necessary.