

Case Number:	CM14-0159498		
Date Assigned:	10/03/2014	Date of Injury:	03/07/2001
Decision Date:	11/06/2014	UR Denial Date:	09/15/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/29/2014

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, has a subspecialty in Interventional Spine, 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:

The patient is a 54 year old female with an injury date of 03/07/01. Based on the 08/20/14 progress report provided by [REDACTED], the patient presents with morbid obesity with a BMI of 40.0-44.9. She has a history of laparoscopic adjustable gastric banding (AGB) and gastric bypass. Her current diagnosis also includes anxiety and depression. Past diagnosis includes obesity, diabetes, unspecified essential hypertension, arthritis, adrenal mass (left), anxiety, depression and hypercholesterolemia. Patient has lost 17 lbs. since surgery, but has begun to suffer regain. She has been referred by surgeon for adjunctive pharmacotherapy. Weight readings: Initial weight 245 lbs. preoperative (AGB) weight 232 lbs. 05/20/14 212 lbs. 08/13/14 215 lbs. 08/20/14 215 lbs. [REDACTED] is requesting decision for Belviq medication for morbid obesity. The utilization review determination being challenged is dated 09/15/14. The rationale is " patient has not had any significant weight loss between 05/20/14 and 08/20/14..." [REDACTED] is the requesting provider, and he provided treatment reports from 03/06/14 - 08/27/14.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Belviq medication for morbid obesity: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Diabetes Chapter states: Lorcaserin (Belviq)

Decision rationale: The patient presents with morbid obesity with a BMI of 40.0-44.9. The request is for decision for Belviq medication for morbid obesity. She has a history of laparoscopic adjustable gastric banding (AGB) and gastric bypass. Patient has lost 17 lbs. since surgery, but has begun to suffer regain; she has been referred by surgeon for adjunctive pharmacotherapy. MTUS is silent regarding the request. However ODG-TWC, Diabetes Chapter states: Lorcaserin (Belviq): "Under study. The FDA has approved lorcaserin (Belviq, [REDACTED]) for the treatment of obesity. Lorcaserin has a moderate effect on weight loss, with a reduction of 3% to 4% of the individual's body weight, with better results in overweight and obese subjects with diabetes. The drug is approved for use in adults with a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or greater (obese), or adults with a BMI of 27 or greater (overweight) and who have at least one weight-related condition such as high blood pressure (hypertension), type 2 diabetes, or high cholesterol (dyslipidemia). (FDA, 2012)" Treater states in progress report dated 08/20/14 that patient's past medical diagnosis includes diabetes, unspecified essential hypertension and hypercholesterolemia; which are FDA indications for the requested medication. However, according to ODG, Belviq is under study, therefore the request is not medically necessary.