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| <b>Case Number:</b>   | CM14-0169777 |                              |            |
| <b>Date Assigned:</b> | 10/20/2014   | <b>Date of Injury:</b>       | 05/29/2010 |
| <b>Decision Date:</b> | 11/20/2014   | <b>UR Denial Date:</b>       | 10/02/2014 |
| <b>Priority:</b>      | Standard     | <b>Application Received:</b> | 10/14/2014 |

### 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 Occupational 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:

There was an application for independent medical review. The diagnosis was cervical sprain lumbar radiculopathy. The review of interest was signed on October 14, 2014. It was for compound creams. The diagnoses are diabetes mellitus rule out diabetic neuropathy, gastroesophageal reflux disease due to nonsteroidal anti-inflammatories, cervical sprain, lumbar radiculopathy. The injury was a slip and fall. The patient is status post a right knee surgery back in 2010, and a right shoulder surgery in 2011.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

#### **Compound Cream - Flurbiprofen 20%/ Tramadol 20% 210gm: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines, Pain (Chronic) Medication - Compound drugs.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines 8 C.C.R. 9792.20 - 9792.26 MTUS (Effective July 18, 2009) Page(s): 111 OF 127.

**Decision rationale:** Per the Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines 8 C.C.R. 9792.20 - 9792.26 (Effective July 18, 2009), page 111 of 127, the MTUS notes topical analgesic compounds are largely experimental in use with few randomized controlled trials to determine

efficacy or safety. Experimental treatments should not be used for claimant medical care. MTUS notes they are primarily recommended for neuropathic pain when trials of antidepressants and anticonvulsants have failed, but in this case, it is not clear what primary medicines had been tried and failed. Also, there is little to no research to support the use of many of these agents. Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended, is not certifiable. This compounded medicine contains several medicines untested in the peer review literature for effectiveness of use topically. Moreover, the MTUS notes that the use of these compounded agents requires knowledge of the specific analgesic effect of each agent and how it will be useful for the specific therapeutic goal required. The provider did not describe each of the agents, and how they would be useful in this claimant's case for specific goals. The request is not medically necessary.

**Compound Cream - Gabapentin 10%/ Amitriptyline 10%/ Dextromethorphan 10% 210gm.:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines, Pain (Chronic) Medication - Compound drugs.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines 8 C.C.R. 9792.20 - 9792.26 MTUS (Effective July 18, 2009) Page(s): 111 OF 127.

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