

Case Number:	CM14-0171291		
Date Assigned:	10/23/2014	Date of Injury:	07/30/2011
Decision Date:	11/25/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/06/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/16/2014

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 Geriatrics and is licensed to practice in New York. 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 injured worker is a man with a date of injury of 7/30/11. He was seen by his provider on 8/27/14 with complaints of thoracic back pain with radiation to his right flank. He reported no significant benefit from a TESI performed on 8/15/14. His medications included oxycontin, zolpidem, Prozac, nambumetone, carisoprodol and Percocet. His exam showed slow ambulation with an analgic gait. His lumbar spine was non-tender. He had decreased range of motion of his torso. He had thoracic spine tenderness right > left with sensory deficits in T4-7 dermatomes on the right side. His left lower extremity strength was 4/5 and right 5/5. His diagnoses included lumbago, lumbar DDD, postlaminectomy syndrome and sciatica. At issue in this review is the refill of oxycontin and Percocet. Length of prior therapy is not documented in the note.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Percocet 10/325 mg, QTY: 210: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 92, 78-80 and 124.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 74-80.

Decision rationale: This worker has chronic back pain with an injury sustained in 2011. His medical course has included use of several medications including narcotics, NSAIDs and muscle relaxants. In opioid use, ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use and side effects is required. Satisfactory response to treatment may be reflected in decreased pain, increased level of function or improved quality of life. The MD visit of 8/15 fails to adequately document efficacy with regards to any improvement in pain or functional status or a detailed discussion of side effects to justify ongoing use. The medical necessity of ongoing Percocet is not substantiated in the records.

Oxycontin 20 mg, QTY: 60: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 92, 78-80 and 124.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 74-80.

Decision rationale: This worker has chronic back pain with an injury sustained in 2011. His medical course has included use of several medications including narcotics, NSAIDs and muscle relaxants. In opioid use, ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use and side effects is required. Satisfactory response to treatment may be reflected in decreased pain, increased level of function or improved quality of life. The MD visit of 8/15 fails to adequately document efficacy with regards to any improvement in pain or functional status or a detailed discussion of side effects to justify ongoing use. The medical necessity of ongoing oxycontin is not substantiated in the records.