

Case Number:	CM14-0176610		
Date Assigned:	10/29/2014	Date of Injury:	05/08/2009
Decision Date:	12/05/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/13/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/24/2014

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 Pain 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:

This is a patient with a date of injury of 5/8/09. A utilization review determination dated 10/13/14 recommends modification of Norco. 9/29/14 medical report identifies cervical pain and limited ROM. The patient notes "reduction in analgesia at least 30-40%," improved capacity with ADLs, self-grooming, and chores around the house, no significant adverse side effects, and no suspicion of aberrant behaviors.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Norco 5/325 mg, QTY: 60: Overtured

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

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

Decision rationale: Regarding the request for Norco, California Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines note that it 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 indication that the medication is improving the patient's function and pain without significant side effects and no aberrant use is detected. In light of the above, the currently requested Norco is medically necessary.