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| <b>Case Number:</b>   | CM14-0180538 |                              |            |
| <b>Date Assigned:</b> | 11/05/2014   | <b>Date of Injury:</b>       | 03/21/2012 |
| <b>Decision Date:</b> | 12/18/2014   | <b>UR Denial Date:</b>       | 10/10/2014 |
| <b>Priority:</b>      | Standard     | <b>Application Received:</b> | 10/30/2014 |

### 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 Emergency Medicine and is licensed to practice in Texas. 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 38-year-old male who reported an injury on 03/21/2012. The mechanism of injury was not provided. On 10/06/2014, the injured worker presented for an evaluation. He had previously tried Flexeril for back pain and neck pain. Much of this note is handwritten and highly illegible. Current medications Included OxyContin, Flexeril, Norco, Paxil. Physical examination was unremarkable. The provider recommended Norco and OxyContin. The provider's rationale was not provided. The Request for Authorization form was not included in the medical documents for review.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Norco 10/325, 1-2 every 4 hrs as needed #180:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 76-80, 91-92.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids, Criteria for use Page(s): 78.

**Decision rationale:** The request for Norco 10/325 mg 1 to 2 every 4 hours as needed with a quantity of 180 is not medically necessary. The California MTUS Guidelines recommend the use of opioids for ongoing management of chronic pain. The guidelines recommend ongoing

review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use and side effects should be evident. There is lack of evidence of an objective assessment of the injured worker's pain level, functional status, evaluation of risk for aberrant drug abuse behavior, and side effects. Additionally, there is lack of documentation of treatment history and length of time the injured worker has been prescribed this medication. As such, medical necessity has not been established.

**Oxycontin 10mg, 1 tab BID #60:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 76-80, 92.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids, Criteria for use Page(s): 78.

**Decision rationale:** The request for Norco 10/325 mg 1 to 2 every 4 hours as needed with a quantity of 180 is not medically necessary. The California MTUS Guidelines recommend the use of opioids for ongoing management of chronic pain. The guidelines recommend ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use and side effects should be evident. There is lack of evidence of an objective assessment of the injured worker's pain level, functional status, evaluation of risk for aberrant drug abuse behavior, and side effects. Additionally, there is lack of documentation of treatment history and length of time the injured worker has been prescribed this medication. As such, medical necessity has not been established.