

Case Number:	CM14-0027383		
Date Assigned:	05/12/2014	Date of Injury:	04/02/2012
Decision Date:	07/10/2014	UR Denial Date:	02/24/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	02/24/2014

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 Anesthesiology, has a subspecialty in Pain Management, and is licensed to practice in Georgia. 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 claimant is a 39-year-old female presenting with chronic pain following a work-related injury on April 2, 2012. The claimant was diagnosed with carpal tunnel syndrome. The claimant was treated with bracing, medications, therapy, cortisone injection and a carpal tunnel release on November 29, 2012. On January 15, 2014 the claimant complains of pain, depression, insomnia and worsening functioning due to increased pain and psych issues. According to medical records the claimant completed 6 acupuncture and 6 physical therapy visits. The physical exam was significant for stiff movements, and decrease grip strength. The claimant's medications include Motrin and Norco. The claimant was diagnosed with status post right carpal tunnel release and right De Quervain's tenosynovitis.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

NORCO 10/325MG, SIXTY COUNT: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 78.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 79.

Decision rationale: The Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines state that weaning of opioids are recommended if (a) there are no overall improvement in function, unless there are extenuating circumstances (b) continuing pain with evidence of intolerable adverse effects (c) decrease in functioning (d) resolution of pain (e) if serious non-adherence is occurring (f) the patient requests discontinuing. The claimant's medical records did not document that there was an overall improvement in function or a return to work with previous opioid therapy. In fact, the medical records note that the claimant was permanent and stationary. The request for Norco 10/325, sixty count, is not medically necessary or appropriate.