

Case Number:	CM14-0040021		
Date Assigned:	06/27/2014	Date of Injury:	03/15/2013
Decision Date:	07/31/2014	UR Denial Date:	03/07/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	04/04/2014

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:

The applicant is a represented [REDACTED], employee who has filed a claim for chronic low back pain reportedly associated with an industrial injury of March 15, 2013. Thus far, the applicant has been treated with the following: Analgesic medications; attorney representation; earlier lumbar fusion surgery in October 2013; and opioid therapy. In a utilization review report dated March 7, 2014, the claims administrator partially certified a request for Viagra 100 mg as 10 tablets of the same and conditionally certified Norco as Norco 5/325, #120, maximum four tablets daily. It was suggested (though not clearly stated) that the Norco conditional certification represented a weaning or partial weaning attempt. The claims administrator did not, however, incorporate cited MTUS and non-MTUS guidelines into his rationale. The applicant's attorney subsequently appealed. A February 27, 2014, note was notable for comments that the applicant apparently developed sexual dysfunction after spine surgery. The applicant was having difficulty achieving and/or maintaining an erection following his spine surgery, it is stated. The introduction of Viagra was endorsed. A March 5, 2014, progress note was notable for comments that the applicant was having persistent complaints of low back pain. The applicant was taking a half tablet of Norco four times daily, it was stated. The applicant was off work on disability, it was stated. The applicant was no longer working as a shipping and receiving clerk, it was suggested. Norco, Neurontin, or Viagra were endorsed, while the applicant was kept off work, on total temporary disability. There was no discussion of medication efficacy insofar as Norco was concerned. An earlier note of February 10, 2014 was notable for comments that the applicant was concerned about issues of erectile dysfunction at that point. A February 6, 2014, progress note was notable for comments that the applicant was having persistent complaints of severe pain even after walking one block. The applicant was

placed off work on this date. It was stated that the applicant was three months removed from earlier lumbar fusion surgery.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Viagra 100mg po prn: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 79-81. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) pain.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation American Urological Association (AUA), Guideline on the Management of Erectile Dysfunction.

Decision rationale: As noted in the American Urological Association Guideline on the management of erectile dysfunction, 5-phosphodiesterase inhibitors such as Viagra should be offered as a first-line of therapy for erectile dysfunction. In this case, the request in question does represent a first-time request for Viagra. The applicant has been having complaints of erectile dysfunction for several months removed from the date of spine surgery. Introduction of Viagra, a 5-phosphodiesterase inhibitor, is indicated. Therefore, the request is medically necessary.