

Case Number:	CM14-0055678		
Date Assigned:	06/16/2014	Date of Injury:	01/02/2003
Decision Date:	07/17/2014	UR Denial Date:	02/26/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	03/07/2014

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 Emergency 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 claimant is presented with a date of injury of 01/02/03. Lyrica is under review. The medication was denied as there had not yet been a trial of gabapentin. On 11/12/13, the claimant was prescribed Gabapentin/Pyridoxine orally and also topical medication. She was also receiving medications for depression by [REDACTED] on 11/01/13. She seen by [REDACTED] on 10/22/13 and had multiple diagnoses including fibromyalgia, obesity, GERD, constipation due to narcotics, obstructive sleep apnea, allergic rhinitis and possible asthma, hypothyroidism, possible growth hormone deficiency, and hyperlipidemia. She was prescribed Gabapentin and Pyridoxine again on 01/03/14. On 01/22/14, she was seen by [REDACTED] and had continued total body pain and chronic fatigue. She had run out of Lyrica and Gabapentin 550 was not enough. It was increased to Q.I.D. She was very upset and depressed. She had a normal neurologic examination. Ongoing psychotherapy was recommended and she was prescribed multiple medications including gabapentin 550, Lyrica, topical Gabapentin/Ketoprofen, and other medications. She needed DeQuervain's surgery for the right wrist and was taking medications for fibromyalgia syndrome.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

LYRICA 75MG COUNT #90: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 9, 19, 112, 127.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines LYRICA.

Decision rationale: The claimant has a diagnosis of fibromyalgia and Lyrica is FDA approved for this indication. The use of anti-epilepsy drugs is by trial and error and there is no documentation in the MTUS that states that Gabapentin must be tried first. The claimant has tried Gabapentin with less than optimal results and the dosage was increased due to lack of adequate pain relief. It is reasonable under such circumstances to try a different medication in the same category. The MTUS state on page 46 that "anti-epilepsy drugs (AEDs) are ... recommended for neuropathic pain (pain due to nerve damage). There is a lack of expert consensus on the treatment of neuropathic pain in general due to heterogeneous etiologies, symptoms, physical signs and mechanisms. Most randomized controlled trials (RCTs) for the use of this class of medication for neuropathic pain have been directed at postherpetic neuralgia and painful polyneuropathy (with diabetic polyneuropathy being the most common example). There are few RCTs directed at central pain and none for painful radiculopathy. (Attal, 2006) The choice of specific agents reviewed below will depend on the balance between effectiveness and adverse reactions..." The MTUS Guidelines also states "Pregabalin (Lyrica) has been documented to be effective in treatment of diabetic neuropathy and postherpetic neuralgia, has FDA approval for both indications, and is considered first-line treatment for both. Pregabalin was also approved to treat fibromyalgia..." Therefore, the request for Lyrica 75 mg, # 90 is medically necessary and appropriate.