

Case Number:	CM14-0060891		
Date Assigned:	07/09/2014	Date of Injury:	11/21/2008
Decision Date:	08/08/2014	UR Denial Date:	04/22/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	05/01/2014

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 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:

According to the records made available for review, this is a 72-year-old male with a 11/21/08 date of injury, and status post left total knee replacement and status post right total knee replacement 2/14/14. At the time (4/22/14) of request for authorization for pharmacy purchase of Tramadol 50mg #200, there is documentation of subjective right knee stiffness and swelling; low back pain. Objective findings include moderate joint effusion and right knee. His current diagnoses include musculoligamentous sprain lumbar spine with lower extremity radiculitis, disc bulges L1-2, L2-3, L3-4, L4-5, and L5-S1, right knee osteoarthritis, status post total knee replacement 2/14/14. Treatment to date is medications (including Tramadol since at least 6/09). There is no documentation that the prescriptions are from a single practitioner and are taken as directed; that the lowest possible dose is being prescribed; and that there will be ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects and functional benefit or improvement as a reduction in work restrictions; an increase in activity tolerance; and/or a reduction in the use of medications or medical services as a result of tramadol use to date.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Pharmacy Purchase of Tramadol 50mg #200: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Web edition.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 74-80.

Decision rationale: MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines necessitate documentation that the prescriptions are from a single practitioner and are taken as directed; the lowest possible dose is being prescribed; and there will be ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects, as criteria necessary to support the medical necessity of opioids. MTUS-Definitions identifies that any treatment intervention should not be continued in the absence of functional benefit or improvement as a reduction in work restrictions; an increase in activity tolerance; and/or a reduction in the use of medications or medical services. Within the medical information available for review, there is documentation of diagnoses of musculoligamentous sprain lumbar spine with lower extremity radiculitis, disc bulges L1-2, L2-3, L3-4, L4-5, and L5-S1, right knee osteoarthritis, status post total knee replacement 2/14/14. However, there is no documentation that the prescriptions are from a single practitioner and are taken as directed; that the lowest possible dose is being prescribed; and that there will be ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects. In addition, given documentation of ongoing use of Tramadol since at least 6/09, there is no documentation of functional benefit or improvement as a reduction in work restrictions; an increase in activity tolerance; and/or a reduction in the use of medications or medical services as a result of tramadol use to date. Therefore, based on guidelines and a review of the evidence, the request for pharmacy purchase of Tramadol 50mg #200 is not medically necessary.