

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0073459		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	07/16/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	05/06/2012
<b>Decision Date:</b>	09/11/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	05/15/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	05/20/2014

### 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 Family Medicine and is licensed to practice in North Carolina. 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 had an original date of injury of 5/6/2012 when the brakes on his truck failed and he jumped from the truck while it was travelling 55 mph. He is treated for closed head injury, cognitive impairment and low back pain. He's been treated with physical therapy and is compliant with a home exercise program. Facet blocks are planned. He currently uses Norco as pain medication.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Norco 10mg #120:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 79-81.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 74-89.

**Decision rationale:** CA MTUS allows for the use of opioid medication, such as Norco, for the management of chronic pain and outlines clearly the documentation that would support the need for ongoing use of an opioid. These steps include documenting pain and functional improvement using validated measures at 6 months intervals, documenting the presence or absence of any adverse effects, documenting the efficacy of any other treatments and of any other medications

used in pain treatment. The medical record in this case does not use any validated method of recording the response of pain to the opioid medication. Cognitive side effects when using the Norco are noted. A urine drug screen is discussed but not obtained. Therefore, the record does not support medical necessity of ongoing opioid therapy with Norco.