

Case Number:	CM14-0080778		
Date Assigned:	07/18/2014	Date of Injury:	03/29/2010
Decision Date:	12/04/2014	UR Denial Date:	05/03/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	06/02/2014

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 Practice 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:

This is a 60 year old male claimant who sustained a work injury on 7/10/09 involving the right knee and back. He was diagnosed with chondromalacia of the patella and lumbar disc disease. He had been on Vicodin for pain since at least 2013. A progress note on 4/22/14 indicated the claimant had crepitation in the right knee. Vicodin was continued and a Synvisc injection was recommended. A request was made the following month for Ultram 50 mg tablets BID.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Ultram oral tablet 50mg #60 for the right knee: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 75.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 92-93.

Decision rationale: According to the guidelines, Tramadol is recommended for short term use for acute exacerbations of back pain. It is not recommended as 1st line for osteoarthritis. In this case, the claimant had been on other opioids (Vicodin) for over a year . There is no superiority of one opioid over another. There is no indication of failure on Tylenol or NSAIDs. The request for Ultram is not medically necessary.

