

Case Number:	CM13-0053798		
Date Assigned:	12/30/2013	Date of Injury:	09/04/1997
Decision Date:	04/03/2015	UR Denial Date:	11/07/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/18/2013

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. 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/Service. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

The Expert Reviewer has the following credentials:
State(s) of Licensure: California, Indiana, New York
Certification(s)/Specialty: Internal Medicine

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 injured worker is a 72 year old male who sustained an industrial injury on 09/04/97. He reports severe obstructive sleep apnea requiring CPAP. Diagnoses include severe obstructive sleep apnea, hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, and overweight status. Treatments to date include CPAP. In a progress noted dated 09/25/13 the treating provider the documented needed for continued use of CPAP machine. On 11/07/13 Utilization Review non-certified a lifetime supply of CPAP supplies, citing non-MTS guidelines.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

LIFETIME SUPPLY OF CPAP MASK AND SUPPLIES (DISP FILTERS, NON-DISP FILTERS, HUMID CHAMBER, CHIN STRAP): Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation <http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/295807-treatment#aw2aab6b6b2>.

Decision rationale: Pursuant to Medscape (peer-reviewed evidence-based guidelines), lifetime supply CPAP mask and supplies (disp filters, non-disp filters, humidity chamber and chinstrap) is not medically necessary. CPAP consists of a blower unit that produces continuous positive airway pressure. It increases the caliber of the airway. Medicare guidelines specify criteria for ordering CPAP for patients with obstructive sleep apnea. All patients with an apnea-hypopnea index (AHI) greater than 15 are considered eligible for CPAP, regardless of symptomatology. In a study of long-term compliance, 68% of patients were using CPAP machine at five years. Predictors of long-term compliance were baseline AHI and the degree of sleepiness. However, the best predictor of compliance was regular use at three months of therapy, indicating that physicians must work to increase patient compliance early in the treatment period. In this case, the injured worker has obstructive sleep apnea documented by a sleep study in 2001. The injured worker uses nasal CPAP on a regular nightly basis, which is very effective. The symptoms of daytime sleepiness and energy level of nasal CPAP has improved. A lifetime supply of CPAP masks and supplies is not clinically indicated. The injured worker requires ongoing monitoring and a 6-month supply of CPAP mask and supplies (disp filters, non-disp filters, humidity chamber and chinstrap) is clinically indicated. The guidelines indicate that physicians must work to increase patient compliance early in the treatment. A lifetime supply of CPAP masks and supplies is not clinically indicated. Consequently, according to the guideline recommendations in order to foster patient compliance with CPAP use and the attrition that accompanies the use of CPAP in the long-term compliance study (see link), lifetime supply CPAP mask and supplies (disp filters, non-disp filters, humidity chamber and chinstrap) is not medically necessary.