

Case Number:	CM14-0115527		
Date Assigned:	08/04/2014	Date of Injury:	08/06/2013
Decision Date:	01/06/2015	UR Denial Date:	07/09/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	07/22/2014

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 8/6/2013. Current diagnoses include right eye blindness, anxiety, insomnia, back pain and abdominal pain. He is seen and managed for anxiety and panic attacks. Medications include Intermezzo, Xanax, Cymbalta and Abilify. The request is for Xanax 0.5 mg #45.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Xanax 0.5mg #45: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines benzodiazepines Page(s): 24.

Decision rationale: CA MTUS guidelines state that benzodiazepines are not recommended for long term use because long term efficacy is unproven and there are risks of dependency. Guidelines generally limit use to 4 weeks. Chronic benzodiazepines are the treatment of choice in very few conditions. Tolerance to hypnotic effects develops rapidly. Tolerance to anxiolytic effects occurs within months and long-term use may actually increase anxiety. In this case, the claimant has been treated with Xanax for many months, considerably longer than the

recommended 4 weeks. Xanax 0.5 mg #45 is not medically necessary as it exceeds the recommendation for short term use.