

Case Number:	CM14-0125153		
Date Assigned:	08/11/2014	Date of Injury:	12/18/2013
Decision Date:	07/02/2015	UR Denial Date:	07/19/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	08/07/2014

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. 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

Certification(s)/Specialty: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

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 41-year-old male, who sustained an industrial injury on 12/18/2013. He reported an injury to his inner left knee. He was initially diagnosed with left knee contusion/sprain. Treatment to date has included medications, cold therapy and a MRI. According to a Doctor's First Report of Occupational Injury dated 04/23/2014, subjective complaints included sadness, helplessness, hopelessness, irritability, less energy, appetite and weight changes, lack of sexual desire, being critical of self, pessimism, angry, sensitive, emotional, nervous, restlessness, agitation, tension, dizziness, fearful without cause, apprehension, chest pain/discomfort, shortness of breath, sweating/hot sensation, excessive worry, avoiding similar situations, angry outbursts, nightmares/distressing dreams, sleep difficulties, gastric disturbances, headaches, chronic pain and hypertension. Diagnoses included major depressive disorder single episode mild, generalized anxiety disorder, male hypoactive sexual desire disorder due to chronic pain, insomnia related to generalized anxiety disorder and chronic pain, stress-related physiological response affecting gastric disturbances, high blood pressure and headaches, status post orthopedic, headaches, high blood pressure, gastric disturbances, heartburn, gastric reflux, nausea, stomach aches and pains and health and economic/financial problems. The treatment plan included cognitive behavioral group psychotherapy, hypnotherapy/relaxation training, a psychiatric evaluation, and monthly follow-ups for 6-8 months. According to a progress report dated 07/08/2014, the injured worker was seen for increased lower back and neck pain. He reported stiffness of the left knee and the left knee giving away. Pain level had increased since the last visit. Pain level was rated 5-6 on a scale of 1-10. Diagnoses included disc disorder lumbar and low back pain. The treatment plan included Norco and Clonazepam. Documents submitted for review show that the injured worker had been prescribed Clonazepam since April 2014. Currently under review is the request for Clonazepam.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Clonazepam 2mg #30: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Benzodiazepines.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Benzodiazepines, page 23.

Decision rationale: Clonazepam is an anti-anxiety medication in the benzodiazepine family and like other benzodiazepines, act by enhancing the effects of gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA) in the brain. GABA is a neurotransmitter (a chemical that nerve cells use to communicate with each other) which inhibits many of the activities of the brain. It is believed that excessive activity in the brain may lead to anxiety or other psychiatric disorders. Clonazepam also is used to prevent certain types of seizures. Clonazepam is used for the short-term relief of the symptoms of anxiety. It is used for certain types of seizures, specifically petit mal seizures, akinetic seizures, and myoclonus, as well as Lennox-Gastaut syndrome. Submitted reports have not adequately addressed the indication for Clonazepam's continued use for the chronic injury, nor is there documented functional efficacy from treatment already rendered. Clonazepam 2mg #30 is not medically necessary and appropriate.