

Case Number:	CM14-0176363		
Date Assigned:	10/29/2014	Date of Injury:	05/06/2009
Decision Date:	01/06/2015	UR Denial Date:	10/10/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/23/2014

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 Occupational Medicine 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:

Patient is a 37 year-old male with date of injury 05/06/2009. The medical document associated with the request for authorization, a primary treating physician's progress report, dated 09/23/2014, lists subjective complaints as pain in the low back. Objective findings: Examination of the lumbar spine revealed tenderness to palpation of the paraspinal muscles overlying the bilateral L5-S1 facet joints. Lumbar extension was sores than lumbar flexion. Sacroiliac joint maneuvers, including Patrick's and Gaeslen's were positive on the left. There was tenderness to palpation of the left sacroiliac joint sulcus. There was restricted and painful range of motion in the lower extremity and trunk. Diagnosis: 1. Status post positive diagnostic left sacroiliac joint injection 2. Status post bilateral L4-5 and bilateral L5-S1 facet joint radiofrequency nerve ablation 3. Status post lumbar facet joint medial branch block 4. Bilateral lumbar facet joint pain at L3-S1 6. Sacroiliac joint pain 7. Lumbar strain/sprain. Original reviewer modified request to Methadone 10mg, #90 with one refill for the purposes of weaning. The medical records supplied for review document that the patient has been taking the following medication for at least as far back as six months.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Methadone tablet 10mg #90, 1 tablet by mouth 3 times a day: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 74-94.

Decision rationale: The Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines state that continued or long-term use of opioids should be based on documented pain relief and functional improvement or improved quality of life. Despite the long-term use of narcotics, the patient has reported very little functional improvement over the course of the last 6 months. Methadone tablet 10mg #90, 1 tablet by mouth 3 times a day is not medically necessary.