

Case Number:	CM14-0197407		
Date Assigned:	12/05/2014	Date of Injury:	06/22/2007
Decision Date:	01/30/2015	UR Denial Date:	10/28/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/24/2014

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 Emergency Medicine, and is licensed to practice in New York. 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 patient is a 49-year-old female who was injured on June 22, 2007. The patient continued to experience pain in her bilateral shoulders, low back, and neck. Physical examination was notable for moderate paralumbar myospasm, moderated paracervical myospasm, decreased range of motion of the cervical spine, and ambulation with cane. Diagnoses included cervical disc with myelopathy, intervertebral lumbar disc disorder, rotator cuff disorder, and cephalgia. Treatment included medications. Request for authorization for Suboxone 8-2 mg #120 was submitted for consideration.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Suboxone 8-2mg #120: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Criteria for use of Opioids.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Interventions and Guidelines Page(s): 26-27.

Decision rationale: Suboxone is Buprenorphine, a partial opioid agonist. It is recommended as an option for treatment of chronic pain (consensus based) in selected patients (not first-line for all patients). Suggested populations include: (1) Patients with a hyperalgesic component to pain;

(2) Patients with centrally mediated pain; (3) Patients with neuropathic pain; (4) Patients at high-risk of non-adherence with standard opioid maintenance; (5) For analgesia in patients who have previously been detoxified from other high-dose opioids. Use for pain with formulations other than Butrans is off-label. Due to complexity of induction and treatment the drug should be reserved for use by clinicians with experience. In this case documentation does not support that the patient is included in any of the populations suggested for treatment with suboxone. The request for Suboxone is not medically necessary.