

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0199591		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	12/10/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	02/15/2011
<b>Decision Date:</b>	01/27/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	11/06/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	12/01/2014

### 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:

10/31/14 office note stated that EW reported condition as "terrible" She reported that weather had made symptoms worse and pain level was 8-9/10. She was noted to be waiting for medications for 2 months. On exam, IW was tender "essentially everywhere". Treating physician stated that IW's ability to perform her activities of daily living depended on her medications and in the meantime had worsened. A functional questionnaire listed specific activities which IW reported she could do only with her medication. Topamax was added and she was provided with Lyrica samples and a Toradol injection. She was prescribed Nucynta IR 75 mg #60, Lyrica, lactulose, Nucynta ER 200 mg #60, Norco 10/325 #180, and hydroxyzine. A second prescription to be filled after 11/29/14, for Nucynta ER 200 mg #60, Norco 10/325 #180, and Nucynta IR 75 mg #120, was also written. However, in the current request the refill Rx is for Nucynta ER 200 mg #120. 11/06/14 peer review decision authorized Nucynta IR 75 mg 1-2 every 4 hours #120. Nucynta ER 200 mg twice daily #60 with additional Rx #120 was denied and modified authorization was recommended for Nucynta ER 200 mg twice daily #60 with additional Rx #60.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Nucynta ER 200mg #60 with additional prescription QTY: 120.00: Upheld**

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

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids, criteria for use; Opioids, dosing Page(s): 78-81,86. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain Chapter, ODG Opioid MED Calculator

**Decision rationale:** MTUS states monitoring of the "4 A's" (analgesia, activities of daily living, adverse side effects, and aberrant drug-taking behaviors) over time should affect therapeutic decisions and provide a framework for documentation of the clinical use of controlled drugs. Due to lack of documented monitoring for aberrant behavior, the MTUS recommendation is not met. MTUS recommendations concerning opioid dosing state: "Recommend that dosing not exceed 120 mg oral morphine equivalents per day, and for patients taking more than one opioid, the morphine equivalent doses of the different opioids must be added together to determine the cumulative dose. Use the appropriate factor below to determine the Morphine Equivalent Dose (MED) for each opioid. In general, the total daily dose of opioid should not exceed 120 mg oral morphine equivalents. Rarely, and only after pain management consultation, should the total daily dose of opioid be increased above 120 mg oral morphine equivalents." IW's regimen of Nucynta ER 200 mg twice daily, Nucynta IR 75 mg four times daily, and Norco 10/325 six times daily provides a total daily opioid dosage equivalent to approximately 316.90 mg of oral morphine. Doubling the dose of Nucynta ER in refill prescription requested increases this to a morphine equivalent dosage (MED) of 463.70. No explanation was provided which would support escalation of opioid dosage in this case well beyond MTUS recommendations. Medical necessity is not established for the requested amount of Nucynta ER, and therefore the request as written is not medically necessary.