MAXIMUS Federal Services

| Case Number: | CM14-0214006 | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Date Assigned: | 12/31/2014 | Date of Injury: | 06/29/2000 |
| Decision Date: | 05/08/2015 | UR Denial Date: | 12/04/2014 |
| Priority: | Standard | Application Received: | 12/22/2014 |

## 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. 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: Iowa, Illinois, Hawaii
Certification(s)/Specialty: Preventive Medicine, Occupational Medicine, Public Health & General Preventive Medicine

## 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 (IW) is a 74 year old female who sustained an industrial injury on 06/29/2000. She reported a cumulative trauma injury to the wrist due to regular job duties. The injured worker was diagnosed as having right shoulder impingement, and right cervical radiculitis. There is no mention of diagnostic testing other than deep tendon reflexes which are normal. No lab results are documented. Treatment to date has included oral pain medications, muscle relaxants, and gastrointestinal prophylaxis. Currently, the injured worker complains of right shoulder pain and right neck stiffness. The treatment plan includes Flexaril 10 mg daily.

## IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Flexeril 10 mg # 30:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Muscle Relaxants (for pain).

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Cyclobenzaprine, Medications for chronic pain, Antispasmodics Page(s): 41-42, 60-61, 64-66.

Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain, Cyclobenzaprine (Flexeril) and Other Medical Treatment Guidelines UpToDate, Flexeril.

**Decision rationale:** MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment states for Cyclobenzaprine, "Recommended as an option, using a short course of therapy. The effect is greatest in the first 4 days of treatment, suggesting that shorter courses may be better. (Browning, 2001) Treatment should be brief." The medical documents indicate that patient is far in excess of the initial treatment window and period. Additionally, MTUS outlines that "Relief of pain with the use of medications is generally temporary, and measures of the lasting benefit from this modality should include evaluating the effect of pain relief in relationship to improvements in function and increased activity. Before prescribing any medication for pain the following should occur: (1) determine the aim of use of the medication; (2) determine the potential benefits and adverse effects; (3) determine the patient's preference. Only one medication should be given at a time, and interventions that are active and passive should remain unchanged at the time of the medication change. A trial should be given for each individual medication. Analgesic medications should show effects within 1 to 3 days, and the analgesic effect of antidepressants should occur within 1 week. A record of pain and function with the medication should be recorded. (Mens, 2005) UpToDate "flexeril" also recommends "Do not use longer than 2-3 weeks." Medical documents do not fully detail the components outlined in the guidelines above and do not establish the need for long term/chronic usage of cyclobenzaprine. ODG states regarding cyclobenzaprine, Recommended as an option, using a short course of therapy, the addition of cyclobenzaprine to other agents is not recommended. This patient is in excess of guideline recommendations of "short term" use. As such, the request for Flexeril 10 mg #30 is not medically necessary.