

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0101171		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	06/03/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	09/25/2013
<b>Decision Date:</b>	07/07/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	05/12/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	05/26/2015

### 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: New Jersey, Alabama, California  
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Neurology, Neuromuscular 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 is a 60 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 09/25/2013 secondary to bending over and immediately felt a pain in lower back. On provider visit dated 04/08/2015 the injured worker has reported lower back pain with radicular symptoms. Radicular symptoms were described as burning sensation and pain level was 7/10. The injured worker was noted not to be working. On examination of the lumbar spine were noted as straight leg raise was positive on the left and lumbar spine spasm and guarding were noted. The diagnoses have included lumbar disc displacement without myelopathy. Treatment to date has included medication which included Vicodin and was current on Hysingla ER and injections, and chiropractic therapy. The provider requested Hysingla ER 20 MG #30 Prescribed 4/24/15.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Hysingla ER 20 MG #30 Prescribed 4/24/15: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Pain.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Criteria for use of opioids Page(s): 76-79.

**Decision rationale:** Hysingla ER "is formed by hydrocodone bitartrate tablet, extended release. According to MTUS guidelines, Hydrocodone is a synthetic opioid indicated for the pain management but not recommended as a first line oral analgesic. In addition and according to MTUS guidelines, ongoing use of opioids should follow specific rules: "(a) Prescriptions from a single practitioner taken as directed, and all prescriptions from a single pharmacy. (b) The lowest possible dose should be prescribed to improve pain and function. (c) Office: Ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects. Pain assessment should include: current pain; the least reported pain over the period since last assessment; average pain; intensity of pain after taking the opioid; how long it takes for pain relief; and how long pain relief lasts. Satisfactory response to treatment may be indicated by the patient's decreased pain, increased level of function, or improved quality of life. Information from family members or other caregivers should be considered in determining the patient's response to treatment. The 4 A's for Ongoing Monitoring: Four domains have been proposed as most relevant for ongoing monitoring of chronic pain patients on opioids: pain relief, side effects, physical and psychosocial functioning, and the occurrence of any potentially aberrant (or non adherent) drug-related behaviors. These domains have been summarized as the "4 A's" (analgesia, activities of daily living, adverse side effects, and aberrant drug taking behaviors). The monitoring of these outcomes over time should affect therapeutic decisions and provide a framework". According to the patient's file, the patient has been using this medication for a long time without any objective documentation of functional improvement. There is no documentation of patient compliance with her medications. In addition, there is no documented updated and signed pain contract. Therefore, the prescription of Hysingla ER 20 MG #30 is not medically necessary.