MAXIMUS Federal Services

Case Number:	CM15-0104838		
Date Assigned:	06/09/2015	Date of Injury:	11/20/2002
Decision Date:	07/10/2015	UR Denial Date:	05/21/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	06/01/2015

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: 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 is a 36 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on 11/20/02. He has reported initial complaints of a back injury at work. The diagnosis included low back pain and spasm of muscle. Treatment to date has included medications, activity modifications, physical therapy, off work and other modalities. Currently, as per the physician progress note dated 2/24/15, the injured worker complains of back pain and spasms. He has a history of chronic back pain and uses medications and Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs for pain control. The pain is rated 1-2/10 at its best and 6-7/10 at its worst and it was hard to move without medications due to pain and stiffness. The current medications included Cyclobenzaprine, Prilosec, Zyrtec, and Vicodin ES. There is no previous urine drug screen noted in the records. The previous therapy sessions were noted. The objective findings and exam reveals weight is 288 pounds, blood pressure is 114/76 and heart rate is 64. The exam was unremarkable and there was no other documented findings noted. The physician requested treatment included Flexeril 10mg, #30.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Flexeril 10mg, #30: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Flexeril (Cyclobenzaprine).

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". As such, the request for Flexeril 10mg, #30 is not medically necessary.