

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0107286		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	06/11/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	12/06/2010
<b>Decision Date:</b>	07/13/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	05/11/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	06/03/2015

### 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: California

Certification(s)/Specialty: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

### 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 62-year-old male injured worker suffered an industrial injury on 12/06/2010. The diagnoses included cervical radiculopathy and spondylosis. The injured worker had been treated with medications and nerve blocks. On 4/21/2015, the treating provider reported intermittent neck pain rated 6/10 with reduction in pain by the nerve blocks as 80%. On exam, there was reduced range of motion to the cervical spine with tenderness. The treatment plan included Norco.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Norco 10mg-325 #112:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines opioids Page(s): 78-80, 86.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids, page(s) 74-96.

**Decision rationale:** Pain symptoms and clinical findings remain unchanged for this chronic injury. Submitted documents show no evidence that the treating physician is prescribing opioids

in accordance to change in pain relief, functional goals with demonstrated improvement in daily activities, decreased in medical utilization or returned to work status. There is no evidence presented of random drug testing or utilization of pain contract to adequately monitor for narcotic safety, efficacy, and compliance. The MTUS provides requirements of the treating physician to assess and document for functional improvement with treatment intervention and maintenance of function that would otherwise deteriorate if not supported. From the submitted reports, there is no demonstrated evidence of specific functional benefit derived from the continuing use of opioids with persistent severe pain for this chronic injury. In addition, submitted reports have not adequately demonstrated the specific indication to support for chronic opioid use without acute flare-up, new injuries, or progressive clinical deficits to support for chronic opioids outside recommendations of the guidelines. The Norco 10mg-325 #112 is not medically necessary and appropriate.