

Case Number:	CM15-0131360		
Date Assigned:	07/17/2015	Date of Injury:	07/13/2001
Decision Date:	08/18/2015	UR Denial Date:	06/13/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	07/07/2015

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: North Carolina

Certification(s)/Specialty: Family Practice

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 55-year-old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 07/13/2001. She has reported injury to the neck. The diagnoses have included cervicalgia; cervical spondylosis without myelopathy; interstitial myositis; headaches; brachial neuritis or radiculitis; displacement cervical intervertebral disc without myelopathy; degeneration of cervical intervertebral disc; postlaminectomy syndrome cervical region; lumbago; and post-traumatic stress disorder. Treatment to date has included medications, diagnostics, moist heat, physical therapy, home exercise program, psychotherapy, spinal cord stimulator implantation; and surgical intervention. Medications have included Oxycodone, Oxycontin, Celebrex, Frova, Zomig, Carisoprodol, Zofran, Lidoderm Patch, Cymbalta, Wellbutrin, Xanax, and Prilosec. A progress report from the treating provider, dated 05/27/2015, documented an evaluation with the injured worker. Currently the injured worker complains of chronic, severe neck pain; bilateral upper extremity painful radiculopathy due to failed neck surgery syndrome and spondylosis; she reports the same severe neck and bilateral upper extremity pain, numbness, tingling, weakness, and pain involving the arms and extending to the fingertips; this is worse on the left, and now she is dropping items, and losing fine motor movement; her low back pain, associated with her spinal cord stimulator hardware generator pain is radiating pain to her right posterior and lateral hip area; she would like to proceed with removing the implant due to severe pain at the site; pain score is 10/10 without medications and 8/10 with medications; the pain today is 8/10; and the medications are keeping her functional, allowing for increased mobility, and tolerance of activities of daily living and home exercises. Objective findings have included decreased deep tendon reflexes in the lower extremities; tenderness to palpation of the cervical paraspinals; tenderness to light touch at the implant generator site; decreased range of motion; tenderness to palpation of thoracic region T5-T6 and the lumbar paraspinals; decreased sensation to pinprick to the left C6 and left C7; and decreased sensation to light touch to the left upper extremity. The

treatment plan has included the request for Oxycontin 30mg XR 12 hour tab #60.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Oxycontin 30mg XR 12 hour tab #60: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines opioids Page(s): 76-84.

Decision rationale: The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on opioids states for ongoing management: On-Going Management. Actions Should Include: (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 for documentation of the clinical use of these controlled drugs. (Passik, 2000) (d) Home: To aid in pain and functioning assessment, the patient should be requested to keep a pain diary that includes entries such as pain triggers, and incidence of end-of-dose pain. It should be emphasized that using this diary will help in tailoring the opioid dose. This should not be a requirement for pain management. (e) Use of drug screening or inpatient treatment with issues of abuse, addiction, or poor pain control. (f) Documentation of misuse of medications (doctor-shopping, uncontrolled drug escalation, drug diversion). (g) Continuing review of overall situation with regard to non-opioid means of pain control. (h) Consideration of a consultation with a multidisciplinary pain clinic if doses of opioids are required beyond what is usually required for the condition or pain does not improve on opioids in 3 months. Consider a psych consult if there is evidence of depression, anxiety or irritability. Consider an addiction medicine consult if there is evidence of substance misuse. When to Continue Opioids: (a) If the patient has returned to work; (b) If the patient has improved functioning and pain. (Washington, 2002) (Colorado, 2002) (Ontario, 2000) (VA/DoD, 2003) (Maddox-AAPM/APS, 1997) (Wisconsin, 2004) (Warfield, 2004) The long-term use of this medication class is not recommended per the California MTUS unless there documented evidence of benefit with measurable outcome measures and improvement in function. There is no documented significant decrease in objective pain measures such as VAS scores for significant periods of time. There are no objective measures of improvement of function.

Therefore all criteria for the ongoing use of opioids have not been met and the request is not medically necessary.