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| Case Number: | CM15-0135172 | | |
| Date Assigned: | 07/23/2015 | Date of Injury: | 03/21/2012 |
| Decision Date: | 08/19/2015 | UR Denial Date: | 06/25/2015 |
| Priority: | Standard | Application Received: | 07/13/2015 |

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: Maryland

Certification(s)/Specialty: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, 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 35-year-old male who sustained an industrial injury on 3/21/12. He had complaints of low back pain radiating down his right leg. Treatments include medication, topical creams, TENS unit, physical therapy, aqua therapy, injections and surgery. Progress report dated 6/16/15 reports continued complaints of low back pain. Diagnoses include lumbar sprain/strain and spondylolisthesis. Treatment plan includes: prescription given for Tramadol, recommend home exercise program and recommend physical therapy times 6. Work status off work until 7/16/15. Follow up in 4 weeks.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Tramadol tab 50mg #45: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 3 Initial Approaches to Treatment Page(s): 47-48, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Tramadol (Ultram). Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Pain Chapter.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Ongoing management Page(s): 78-80.

Decision rationale: Tramadol tab 50mg #45 is not medically necessary per the MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines. The MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines state that a 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. The MTUS does not support ongoing opioid use without improvement in function or pain. The documentation submitted does not reveal the above pain assessment or clear evidence of significant objective functional improvement on prior Tramadol therefore the request for continued Tramadol is not medically necessary.