

Case Number:	CM15-0136330		
Date Assigned:	07/24/2015	Date of Injury:	02/01/2010
Decision Date:	08/20/2015	UR Denial Date:	07/08/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	07/14/2015

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 30 year old female patient who sustained an industrial injury on 02/01/2010. The injured worker was employed as a policy specialist and sustained cumulative trauma over the course of employment resulting in injury. A follow up initial visit dated 02/20/2013 reported subjective chief complaint of having neck pain with stiffness and intermittent radiation down bilateral lower extremities that limits function and ability to work. The patient is status post a cervical spine replacement fusion on 11/30/2012. Previous diagnostic and treatment modality to include: radiography study, magnetic resonance imaging, electric nerve conduction study, physical therapy, acupuncture, and both Cortisone and epidural injections. The patient's problem list consisted of: pain decreasing functional activities, decreased range of motion preventing full functional activity, decreased strength limiting functional abilities, decreased participation in recreational activities, pain decreasing functional mobility, and marked muscle pain and tightness in cervical region. A MRI done on 09/22/2010 revealed congenitally short pedicles, which mildly decreases the AP diameter of the spinal canal; L4-5 disc protrusion and facet, and ligamentum flavum hypertrophy produces mild to moderated spinal canal narrowing and mild neural foraminal narrowing; L5-S1 disc protrusion and facet hypertrophy produces moderate to marked spinal canal narrowing and mild neural foraminal narrowing; straightening of the lumbar lordosis which may be due to myospasm. A recent primary treating office visit dated 06/09/2015 reported chief complaints of having frequent pain in the cervical area that is aggravated by repetitive motions of the neck. There is radiation into the upper extremity and associated migrainous headaches. There is also constant low back pain

that radiates into lower extremities. There is frequent bilateral shoulder pain, and bilateral wrist pain. She also is with complaint of having bilateral hip pain. She received an injection of Toradol this visit. The treating diagnoses were: status post C4-C7 cervical reconstruction; severe lumbar discopathy, status post bilateral carpal tunnel releases, left shoulder tendinitis with impingement syndrome, right shoulder impingement syndrome with possible partial tear supraspinatus tendon, hip internal derangement and status post left carpal tunnel release. The plan of care noted recommending the patient undergo electric nerve conduction study of all extremities, pain management referral, and may continue with work duty.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Lansoprazole DR (Prevacid) 20mg, #120: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs); NSAIDs, GI symptoms & cardiovascular risk Page(s): 67-68, 68-69.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAID Page(s): 68-72.

Decision rationale: The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on NSAID therapy and proton pump inhibitors (PPI) states: Recommend with precautions as indicated below. Clinicians should weight the indications for NSAIDs against both GI and cardiovascular risk factors. Determine if the patient is at risk for gastrointestinal events: (1) age > 65 years; (2) history of peptic ulcer, GI bleeding or perforation; (3) concurrent use of ASA, corticosteroids, and/or an anticoagulant; or (4) high dose/multiple NSAID (e.g., NSAID + low-dose ASA). Recent studies tend to show that H. Pylori does not act synergistically with NSAIDS to develop gastro duodenal lesions. Recommendations:-Patients with no risk factor and no cardiovascular disease: Non-selective NSAIDs OK (e.g, ibuprofen, naproxen, etc.). Patients at intermediate risk for gastrointestinal events and no cardiovascular disease: (1) A non-selective NSAID with either a PPI (Proton Pump Inhibitor, for example, 20 mg omeprazole daily) or misoprostol (200 ?g four times daily) or (2) a Cox-2 selective agent. Long-term PPI use (> 1 year) has been shown to increase the risk of hip fracture (adjusted odds ratio 1.44). Patients at high risk for gastrointestinal events with no cardiovascular disease: A Cox-2 selective agent plus a PPI if absolutely necessary. There is no documentation provided that places this patient at intermediate or high risk that would justify the use of a PPI. There is no mention of current gastrointestinal or cardiovascular disease. For these reasons the criteria set forth above per the California MTUS for the use of this medication has not been met. Therefore the request is not medically necessary.

Tramadol ER 150mg, #90: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Therapeutic Trial of Opioids; Opioids, specific drug list; Opioids, dosing Page(s): 76-80, 91-94, 86.

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. These criteria are met in the provided medical records and the request is medically necessary.