

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0166056		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	09/03/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	11/08/1997
<b>Decision Date:</b>	10/06/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	08/07/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	08/24/2015

### 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 63-year-old female, who sustained an industrial injury on November 08, 1997. Medical records provided by the treating physician did not indicate the injured worker's mechanism of injury. The injured worker was diagnosed as having sleep arousal disorder, reflex sympathetic dystrophy of the lower extremity, and status post placement of a spinal cord stimulator. Treatment and diagnostic studies to date has included above noted procedure, status post right knee surgery, psychotherapy, and medication regimen. In a progress note dated July 28, 2015 the treating physician reports complaints of knee pain. Examination reveals swelling to the right knee, tenderness to palpation of the right knee, and decreased range of motion to the right knee, which was noted to be the injured worker's baseline for range of motion of the right knee. The injured worker's medication regimen included Hydromorphone, Gabapentin, Lidoderm Patches, Doxepin HCl, Risperidone, Methadone, Oxycodone, and Trazadone. The injured worker's pain level was rated a 7 to 8 out of 10 on the visual analog scale, but the documentation provided did not indicate the injured worker's pain level as rated on a pain scale prior to use of her current medication regimen and after use of her current medication regimen to indicate the effects with the use of the injured worker' current medication regimen. However, the treating physician noted that the injured worker had 60 to 65% relief of pain secondary use of the medications Hydromorphone and Morphine Sulfate Extended Release, which allows the injured worker to ambulate for up to ten minutes prior to the return of pain. The treating physician requested Hydromorphone 4mg with a quantity of 120 with two prescriptions noting current use of this medication.

## IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Hydromorphone 4mg #120, 2 prescriptions:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 86, 88.

**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.