

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0166361		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	09/04/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	04/20/2013
<b>Decision Date:</b>	10/06/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	08/18/2015
<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 39 year old male who sustained a work related injury on 04-20-13. Initial complaints include a left upper extremity injury. Initial diagnoses are not available. Treatments to date include left shoulder surgery, left carpal tunnel release, left wrist surgery, injections, physical therapy, and medications. Diagnostic studies include MRIs, a functional capacity evaluation, and an electrodiagnostic study of the bilateral upper extremities. Current complaints include pain in the left shoulder, left hand, left wrist, as well as left ring finger numbness, and inability to grip or grasp with the left hand. Current diagnoses include left median neuropathy with possible carpal tunnel syndrome, left chronic wrist pain with almost complete loss of range of motion in the wrist, left De Quervain's syndrome, left 4 finger intrinsic tightness, and left ulnar neuropathy Guyon's canal. In a progress note dated 07-30-15 the treating provider reports the plan of care as medications including cyclobenzaprine, Prilosec, Tylenol #3, and topical compounds consisting of amitriptyline-gabapentin-bupivacaine-hyaluronic acid and flurbiprofen-baclofen-dexamethasone-hyaluronic acid. The requested treatments include and topical compounds consisting of amitriptyline-gabapentin-bupivacaine-hyaluronic acid and flurbiprofen-baclofen-dexamethasone-hyaluronic acid.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Scar cream: Flurbiprofen 20%, Baclofen 10%, Dexamethasone micro 0.2%, hyaluronic acid 0.2%, 240gms: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines topical analgesics Page(s): 111-113.

**Decision rationale:** The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on topical analgesics states: Recommended as an option as indicated below. Largely experimental in use with few randomized controlled trials to determine efficacy or safety. Primarily recommended for neuropathic pain when trials of antidepressants and anticonvulsants have failed. (Namaka, 2004) These agents are applied locally to painful areas with advantages that include lack of systemic side effects, absence of drug interactions, and no need to titrate. (Colombo, 2006) Many agents are compounded as monotherapy or in combination for pain control (including NSAIDs, opioids, capsaicin, local anesthetics, antidepressants, glutamate receptor antagonists, -adrenergic receptor agonist, adenosine, cannabinoids, cholinergic receptor agonists, agonists, prostanoids, bradykinin, adenosine triphosphate, biogenic amines, and nerve growth factor). (Argoff, 2006) There is little to no research to support the use of many of these agents. Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not recommended. The requested medication contains ingredients (baclofen), which are not indicated per the California MTUS for topical analgesic use. Therefore the request is not medically necessary.

**Transdermal cream: amitriptyline 10%, gabapentin 10%, bupivacaine 5%, hyaluronic acid 0.2% in cream base, 240gms: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines topical analgesics Page(s): 111-113.

**Decision rationale:** The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on topical analgesics states: Recommended as an option as indicated below. Largely experimental in use with few randomized controlled trials to determine efficacy or safety. Primarily recommended for neuropathic pain when trials of antidepressants and anticonvulsants have failed. (Namaka, 2004) These agents are applied locally to painful areas with advantages that include lack of systemic side effects, absence of drug interactions, and no need to titrate. (Colombo, 2006) Many agents are compounded as monotherapy or in combination for pain control (including NSAIDs, opioids, capsaicin, local anesthetics, antidepressants, glutamate receptor antagonists, -adrenergic receptor agonist, adenosine, cannabinoids, cholinergic receptor agonists, agonists, prostanoids, bradykinin, adenosine triphosphate, biogenic amines, and nerve growth factor). (Argoff, 2006) There is little to no research to support the use of many of these agents. Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not

recommended. The requested medication contains ingredients (gabapentin), which are not indicated per the California MTUS for topical analgesic use. Therefore, the request is not medically necessary.