

|                       |              |                              |            |
|-----------------------|--------------|------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Case Number:</b>   | CM15-0167058 |                              |            |
| <b>Date Assigned:</b> | 09/04/2015   | <b>Date of Injury:</b>       | 06/05/2013 |
| <b>Decision Date:</b> | 10/23/2015   | <b>UR Denial Date:</b>       | 08/13/2015 |
| <b>Priority:</b>      | Standard     | <b>Application Received:</b> | 08/25/2015 |

### 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: California, District of Columbia, Maryland  
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Anesthesiology, Pain Management

### 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 38 year old male who sustained an industrial injury on 6-5-13. He had complaints of lower back pain. Progress report dated 7-30-15 reports continued complaints of dull to sharp left sided lower back pain that radiates down the left lower extremity. The pain is rated 7 out of 10 and is worse with prolonged sitting, standing, lifting and pushing heavy objects. Current treatment includes: NSAIDs, flexeril, home exercise program, TENs unit, ultrasound therapy, chiropractic therapy and lumbar support. Diagnoses include: lumbar strain and lumbar radiculopathy. Plan of care includes: dispensed naproxen, omeprazole, cyclobenzaprine and TENS patches, started Gabapentin 100 mg #30, continue chiropractic therapy, continue ultrasound treatment visits as needed, and continue back support. Work status: permanent and stationary. Follow up in 1 month.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Retrospective request: Cyclobenzaprine 7.5mg #60 (DOS 7/30/2015): Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG).

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Muscle relaxants (for pain).

**Decision rationale:** With regard to muscle relaxants, the MTUS CPMTG states: "Recommend non-sedating muscle relaxants with caution as a second-line option for short-term treatment of acute exacerbations in patients with chronic LBP. (Chou, 2007) (Mens, 2005) (Van Tulder, 1998) (Van Tulder, 2003) (Van Tulder, 2006) (Schnitzer, 2004) (See, 2008) Muscle relaxants may be effective in reducing pain and muscle tension, and increasing mobility. However, in most LBP cases, they show no benefit beyond NSAIDs in pain and overall improvement." Regarding Cyclobenzaprine: "Recommended for a short course of therapy. Limited, mixed-evidence does not allow for a recommendation for chronic use. Cyclobenzaprine is a skeletal muscle relaxant and a central nervous system depressant with similar effects to tricyclic antidepressants (e.g. amitriptyline). Cyclobenzaprine is more effective than placebo in the management of back pain, although the effect is modest and comes at the price of adverse effects." Per p41 of the MTUS guidelines, the effect is greatest in the first 4 days of treatment, suggesting that shorter courses may be better. Treatment is recommended for the treatment of acute spasm limited to a maximum of 2-3 weeks. UDS that evaluate for cyclobenzaprine can provide additional data on whether the injured worker is compliant, however in this case there is no UDS testing for cyclobenzaprine. The documentation submitted for review indicates that the injured worker has been using this medication since at least 4/2015. There is no documentation of the patients' specific functional level or percent improvement with treatment with cyclobenzaprine. As it is recommended only for short-term use, medical necessity cannot be affirmed and therefore is not medically necessary.