

Case Number:	CM15-0181834		
Date Assigned:	09/23/2015	Date of Injury:	10/30/2009
Decision Date:	10/28/2015	UR Denial Date:	09/09/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/15/2015

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 45 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 10-30-09. The injured worker was diagnosed as having cervical spine strain, multilevel cervical spine spondylosis with degenerative disc disease, and left upper extremity greater than right upper extremity radiculopathy with C8 nerve root impingement denervation. Treatment to date has included physical therapy, acupuncture, trapezius trigger point injections, cognitive behavioral therapy, and medication including Vicodin. Currently, the injured worker complains of neck and upper back pain. On 8-26-15, the treating physician requested authorization for topical compound cream: Ketamine-Baclofen-Bupivacaine-Gabapentin or Phenadrine-Cyclobenzaprine-Pentoxifyl 240g with 5 refills. On 9-4-15, the request was non-certified. The utilization review physician noted topical compounded cream with the requested ingredients is non-certified. All of the requested ingredients do not have evidence based proven efficacy and therefore are not recommended by the guidelines and the standard of practice.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Topical compound cream: Ketamine/Baclofen/Bupivacaine/Gabapentin/or phenadrine/cyclobenzaprine/pentoxifyl line apply 1-2 grams three times a day to 4 times a day 240gm with 5 refills: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Topical Analgesics.

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.