

Case Number:	CM15-0182099		
Date Assigned:	09/23/2015	Date of Injury:	01/18/2009
Decision Date:	11/03/2015	UR Denial Date:	08/17/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/16/2015

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: Massachusetts

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 69 year old female injured worker suffered an industrial injury on 1-18-2009. The diagnoses included post-traumatic neuropraxia, sciatic nerve, and left lower extremity. On 6-9-2015 the provider reported low back pain radiated to the left leg with cramps. On exam there was weakness and positive straight leg raise. On 8-11-2015 the treating provider reported severe left leg pain. On exam there was weakness and restricted range of motion. The diagnostics included urine drug screens 4-28-2015, 3-10-2015, 12-10-2014, and 3-22-2011. The documentation provided did not include evidence of a comprehensive pain evaluation with pain levels with and without medications, no evidence of functional improvement with treatment and no aberrant risk assessment except for inconstant urine drug screens. The Utilization Review on 8-17-2015 determined non-certification for Pain management consult, modified for Norco 10/325mg #180 to #15 and Baclofen 20mg #90.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Pain management consult: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ACOEM Guidelines, page 127.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS General Approaches 2004, Section(s): Prevention, General Approach to Initial Assessment and Documentation, Initial Approaches to Treatment, Cornerstones of Disability Prevention and Management.

Decision rationale: The ACOEM Chapter 2 on Initial Approaches indicates that specialized treatments or referrals require a rationale for their use. According to the documents available for review, there is rationale provided to support a referral to a pain specialist. Therefore at this time the requirement for treatment have been met, and is medically necessary.

Norco 10/325mg #180: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Opioids, criteria for use.

Decision rationale: According to the MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines section on Opioids, On-Going Management, p 74-97, (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 injured worker'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 injured worker'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 injured workers 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 injured worker 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 in injured worker 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. Additionally, the MTUS states that continued use of opioids requires (a) the injured worker has

returned to work, (b) the injured worker has improved functioning and pain. There is no current documentation of baseline pain, pain score with use of opioids, functional improvement on current regimen, side effects or review of potentially aberrant drug taking behaviors as outlined in the MTUS and as required for ongoing treatment. Therefore, at this time, the requirement for treatment has not been met and is not medically necessary.

Baclofen 20mg #90: 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): Muscle relaxants (for pain).

Decision rationale: According to the MTUS, Baclofen is recommended orally for the treatment of spasticity and muscle spasm related to multiple sclerosis and spinal cord injuries. Baclofen has been noted to have benefits for treating lancinating, paroxysmal neuropathic pain (trigeminal neuralgia, non- FDA approved). (ICSI, 2007) According to the documents available for review, IW has none of the MTUS / FDA recommended indications for the use of this medication. Therefore at this time the requirement for treatment have not been met, and is not medically necessary.