

Case Number:	CM15-0187115		
Date Assigned:	09/29/2015	Date of Injury:	08/30/2008
Decision Date:	11/10/2015	UR Denial Date:	08/28/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/23/2015

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, Arizona, Maryland
Certification(s)/Specialty: Psychiatry

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(n) 43 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on 8-30-08. The injured worker was diagnosed as having post-traumatic stress disorder and major depression. Medical records (6-16-14 through 8-25-14) indicated continued pain and depression. The injured worker was temporarily and totally disabled due to multiple orthopedic related injuries. Treatment to date has included psychiatric treatment, Prazosin and Lexapro. As of the PR2 dated 4-7-14, the injured worker reports anxiety, depression, irritability and sleep disturbances. The treating physician noted that the injured worker was anxious, depressed and was in obvious physical discomfort. The treating physician requested Escitalopram (DOS 4-5-14). The Utilization Review dated 8-28-15, non-certified the request for Escitalopram (DOS 4-5-14).

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Escitalopram (DOS 4/5/14): 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): Antidepressants for chronic pain. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Stress & Mental Illness/ Antidepressants for treatment of MDD (major depressive disorder).

Decision rationale: MTUS states "SSRIs (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors)-Not recommended as a treatment for chronic pain, but SSRIs may have a role in treating secondary depression. Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), a class of antidepressants that inhibit serotonin reuptake without action on noradrenaline, are controversial based on controlled trials. It has been suggested that the main role of SSRIs may be in addressing psychological symptoms associated with chronic pain". ODG states "MDD (major depressive disorder) treatment, severe presentations-The American Psychiatric Association strongly recommends anti-depressant medications for severe presentations of MDD, unless electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) is being planned. (American Psychiatric Association, 2006) Many treatment plans start with a category of medication called selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), because of demonstrated effectiveness and less severe side effects". The injured worker has been diagnosed with chronic pain, post-traumatic stress disorder and major depressive disorder. Per progress report dated 4/7/2015, he continues to experience anxiety, depression, and irritability and sleep disturbances being on Lexapro and Prazosin. There is no documentation of stability of symptoms with continued use of this medication. Also, the request does not indicate the dose or the quantity being requested. Thus, the request for Escitalopram (DOS 4/5/14) is not medically necessary.