

Case Number:	CM15-0193762		
Date Assigned:	11/03/2015	Date of Injury:	05/30/2007
Decision Date:	12/14/2015	UR Denial Date:	09/24/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/02/2015

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 male, who sustained an industrial-work injury on 5-30-07. He reported initial complaints of back pain. The injured worker was diagnosed as having chronic pain disorder, major depression, generalized anxiety disorder, and sleep disorder. Treatment to date has included medication and CBT (cognitive behavior therapy). Currently, the injured worker complains of moderate to intense pain levels in his back rated 6 out of 10. Per the primary physician's progress report (PR-2) on 9-1-15, he remains active doing household chores and his pain management program and actively communicate better emotionally with his wife. He is easily irritable and unable to adjust to his current lifestyle. Medication included Ibuprofen, Paxil, Klonopin, Percocet 7.5-325 mg, Seroquel, Medical marijuana, and Prilosec. Current plan of care includes pain management program, CBT (cognitive behavior therapy), relaxation techniques, and medication. The Request for Authorization requested service to include Klonopin 1mg #90. The Utilization Review on 9-24-15 denied the request for Klonopin 1mg #90.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Klonopin 1mg #90: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS General Approaches 2004. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Mental Illness & Stress: Antidepressants for treatment of MDD (major depressive disorder) 2015.

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

Decision rationale: The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on benzodiazepines states: Benzodiazepines Not recommended for long-term use because long-term efficacy is unproven and there is a risk of dependence. Most guidelines limit use to 4 weeks. Their range of action includes sedative/hypnotic, anxiolytic, anticonvulsant, and muscle relaxant. Chronic benzodiazepines are the treatment of choice in very few conditions. Tolerance to hypnotic effects develops rapidly. Tolerance to anxiolytic effects occurs within months and long-term use may actually increase anxiety. A more appropriate treatment for anxiety disorder is an antidepressant. Tolerance to anticonvulsant and muscle relaxant effects occurs within weeks. (Baillargeon, 2003) (Ashton, 2005). The chronic long-term use of this class of medication is recommended in very few conditions per the California MTUS. There is no evidence however of failure of first line agent for the treatment of anxiety or insomnia in the provided documentation. For this reason, the request is not medically necessary.