

Case Number:	CM15-0194202		
Date Assigned:	10/08/2015	Date of Injury:	02/14/2014
Decision Date:	11/16/2015	UR Denial Date:	09/02/2015
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 65 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 2-14-14. The injured worker is being treated for cubital tunnel syndrome, chronic pain syndrome and pain in right arm. Treatment to date has included cubital tunnel release, oral medications including Cymbalta 20mg (which is not helping), Tylenol #3 and Lyrica 75mg (it is noted at 150mg dose she was "loopy"), home exercise program, occupational therapy and activity modifications. On 8-26-15, the injured worker complains of upper arm pain associated with weakness, numbness and tingling. Physical exam performed on 8-26-15 revealed tenderness of trapezius, decreased sensation of right C6 of distal forearm, thumb and index finger, C7 decreased sensation of middle finger and C8 decreased sensation of 4th and 5th digits. Lyrica is not mentioned as a current medication on visit of 8-26-15. On 7-14-15, the treatment plan included weaning off Lyrica. On 9-2-15 request for Lyrica was non-certified by utilization review.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Lyrica 75mg: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Anti-epilepsy drugs (AEDs).

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Anti-epilepsy drugs (AEDs).

Decision rationale: The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on Lyrica states: Pregabalin (Lyrica, no generic available) has been documented to be effective in treatment of diabetic neuropathy and post herpetic neuralgia, has FDA approval for both indications, and is considered first-line treatment for both. This medication is designated as a Schedule V controlled substance because of its causal relationship with euphoria. (Blommel, 2007) This medication also has an anti-anxiety effect. Pregabalin is being considered by the FDA as treatment for generalized anxiety disorder and social anxiety disorder. In June 2007 the FDA announced the approval of pregabalin as the first approved treatment for fibromyalgia. (ICSI, 2007) (Tassone, 2007) (Knotkova, 2007) (Eisenberg, 2007) (Crofford, 2005) (Stacey, 2008) The patient does not have the diagnoses of diabetic neuropathy, fibromyalgia or post herpetic neuropathy. There is no documentation of failure of other first line agents for peripheral neuropathy. Therefore, guideline recommendations have not been met and the request is not medically necessary.