MAXIMUS Federal Services

Case Number:	CM15-0209294		
Date Assigned:	10/28/2015	Date of Injury:	05/11/2011
Decision Date:	12/09/2015	UR Denial Date:	10/10/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/23/2015

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: Massachusetts
Certification(s)/Specialty: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, 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 injured worker is a 54 year old female who sustained an industrial injury on 5-11-11. A review of the medical records indicates she is undergoing treatment for moderate obstructive sleep apnea. Medical records (9-17-15, 10-1-15) indicate complaints of insomnia, latency to sleep - onset 2 hours despite use of hypnotics, not feeling refreshed after a night's sleep, awakening numerous times during the night, fatigue, daytime sleepiness, drowsiness, pain in the lower back and right shoulder that radiates to her hands and legs associated with pain and numbness that awakens her from sleep, difficulty sleeping in a comfortable position, and racing thoughts with regard to her physical limitations. She reports "severe" difficulty with physical activity due to fatigue, "severe" difficulty with sensory function, "moderate" difficulty with travel due to lack of concentration and sleepiness, "severe" difficulty with sexual function, and "severe" difficulty with sleep. The clinical exam (10-1-15) reveals her weight at 185 pounds, which is noted to be down from 200 pounds on 9-17-15. The physical exam reveals Mallampati Grade III, redundant pharyngeal and tonsillar tissue, high tongue base, enlarged and elongated uvula, and no significant scalloping of the tongue. Diagnostic studies have included a Epworth sleep scale, scoring 20, indicating "severe sleepiness". The treatment plan includes continued use of a CPAP at a pressure of 9cm of water. The treating provider states that due to her 15-pound weight loss, the injured worker states that the pressure is "excessive" for her. Recommendations include another titration study. The utilization review (10-10-15) includes the request for authorization of CPAP re-titration study. The request was denied.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

CPAP re-titration study, Qty 1: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines: Pain (Chronic) - Polysomnography (sleep study).

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Kushida CA; Littner MR; Hirshkowitz M et al. Practice parameters for the use of continuous and bilevel positive airway pressure devices to treat adult patients with sleep-related breathing disorders. SLEEP 2006; 29 (3): 375-380.

Decision rationale: The claimant sustained a work injury in May 2011 when she slipped and fell and continues to be treated for injuries to the head, neck, low back, and right leg. She has moderate obstructive sleep apnea and underwent a CPAP titration study in October 2012. When seen, she was using CPAP two times per week. She felt anxious and claustrophobic with use of her full face mask and felt that the pressure was excessive. She was noted to have lost 15 pounds since initial titration. She has an Epworth Sleep Score of 20. Physical examination findings included a body mass index of 31.8. The Mallampati Grade was III. Another titration using a nasal or nasal pillow mask was requested. The treatment of insomnia should be based on the etiology. In this case, the claimant has obstructive sleep apnea and is only using her CPAP two times per week and has and ESS of 20 out of 24. Another titration with an alternative mask is medically necessary.