

|                       |              |                              |            |
|-----------------------|--------------|------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Case Number:</b>   | CM15-0027482 |                              |            |
| <b>Date Assigned:</b> | 02/19/2015   | <b>Date of Injury:</b>       | 08/06/2000 |
| <b>Decision Date:</b> | 04/14/2015   | <b>UR Denial Date:</b>       | 02/04/2015 |
| <b>Priority:</b>      | Standard     | <b>Application Received:</b> | 02/13/2015 |

### 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: New Jersey

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 62-year-old female who sustained a work related injury on August 6, 2000. She worked as an assistant manager at a restaurant, was struck by a hostile customer, and fell to the ground striking her head. She had head, neck, back and left leg injuries. Diagnostic imaging was performed and she was diagnosed with a concussion. She developed tremors. Treatments included physical therapy, medications a cervical collar, neurologist, electromyogram studies, psychologist and aqua therapy. She was also diagnosed with fibromyalgia. Currently, the injured worker complained of muscle tightness in the upper and lower back with spasms and pain. On February 4, 2015, a request for one prescription, for Soma 350mg twice a day for muscle spasms #60 was modified to one prescription of Soma 350mg twice a day for muscle spasms #20, by Utilization Review, noting the California Medical Treatment Utilization Schedule Guidelines.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Soma 350mg twice a day for muscle spasms #60:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Carisprodol (Soma). Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Pain Procedure Summary.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Muscle relaxants, 63-66, AND Carisoprodol, p. 29.

**Decision rationale:** The MTUS Guidelines state that using muscle relaxants for muscle strain may be used as a second-line option for short-term treatment of acute exacerbations of chronic pain, but provides no benefit beyond NSAID use for pain and overall improvement, and are likely to cause unnecessary side effects. Efficacy appears to diminish over time, and prolonged use may lead to dependence. The MTUS also states that carisoprodol specifically is not recommended as it is not indicated for long-term use, mostly due to its side effect profile and its potential for abuse. Weaning may be necessary for patients using high doses of carisoprodol. In the case of this worker, she exhibited muscle tightness and trigger points of the back and was recommended Soma for "muscle spasm". She was given 60 pills, which is beyond a reasonable number for a flare-up of muscle spasm, for which there was no evidence to support as the worker's symptoms were chronic. Also, due to the fact that Soma is not meant for chronic use, the Soma will be considered medically unnecessary.