

Case Number:	CM15-0218832		
Date Assigned:	11/10/2015	Date of Injury:	10/02/2008
Decision Date:	12/31/2015	UR Denial Date:	10/30/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/06/2015

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

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 55 year old female who sustained an industrial injury on 10-2-2008. A review of medical records indicates the injured worker is being treated for back pain, lower, right SI joint dysfunction versus facet arthropathy, rotator cuff syndrome right, status post-surgical, and myalgia. Medical records dated 10-22-2015 noted pain from the back that radiates to the right thigh. Pain level was 8 out of 10. Right shoulder pain was rated 7 out of 10. She was taking Bupropion XL that helps a little. Pain was the same at the last visit. Physical examination noted right shoulder is lower than the left shoulder. The glenohumeral joint was tender to palpation. Flexion, extension, abduction, external rotation, and internal rotation were all positive. She was unable to bend forward at the lumbar spine. Treatment has included Bupropion since at least 8-26-2015. Utilization review form dated 10-30-2015 modified Bupropion 150mg #60.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Bupropion tab 150mg ER BID #60: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Antidepressants for chronic pain.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Antidepressants for chronic pain, Bupropion (Wellbutrin).

Decision rationale: This injured worker receives treatment for chronic pain involving the low back and shoulder. This relates back to an industrial injury dated 10/02/ 2008. The patient's treatment includes bupropion ER 150 mg 1 twice a day, the subject of this review. The medical diagnoses in this case are lumbago, R SI joint dysfunction, R rotator cuff syndrome, and myalgia. The bupropion has helped lessen the pain a little. On exam there was tenderness top palpation on the R proximal humerus. ROM testing of the shoulder triggered pain. Flexion was limited due to low back pain. The documentation does not make clear if the bupropion is being prescribed to treat the major depression, chronic pain, or both. The guidelines state that a trial of an antidepressant agent may be medically indicated for patients with chronic pain. The guidelines, however, point out that antidepressants, especially the tricyclics, are preferred for chronic pain and peripheral neuropathy. The PHQ-9 screening test is a useful tool to identify patients with major depression of the evaluation the effect of treatment for major depression. If the physician intended to give the patient the bupropion for depression, then the PHQ-9 offers a means of evaluating the effects of the treatments on the patients. There is no clear documentation of this. Clinical studies have not shown evidence that bupropion is effective for cases of axial low back pain. Bupropion is not medically necessary.