

Case Number:	CM15-0033098		
Date Assigned:	02/26/2015	Date of Injury:	05/09/2013
Decision Date:	04/14/2015	UR Denial Date:	02/18/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	02/23/2015

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: California, Arizona, Maryland
Certification(s)/Specialty: Psychiatry

CLINICAL CASE SUMMARY

The expert reviewer developed the following clinical case summary based on a review of the case file, including all medical records:

This 38 year old female sustained an industrial injury on 5/9/13. She subsequently reports continued neck and back pain. Diagnoses include lumbar strain, cervical strain, anxiety, depression, and sleep disorder. Treatments to date have included physical therapy, injections and prescription pain medications. On 2/18/15, Utilization Review non-certified requests for 6 Monthly Sessions of Psychotropic Medication Management, Ativan 0.5mg #60 and Restoril 30mg #30. The 6 Monthly Sessions of Psychotropic Medication Management was denied based on MTUS guidelines. The Ativan was denied based on non-MTUS guidelines. The Restoril was denied based on ODG guidelines.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

6 Monthly Sessions of Psychotropic Medication Management: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 15 Stress Related Conditions Page(s): 388, 398.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Chapter: Mental Illness & Stress Topic: Office visits.

Decision rationale: ODG states "Office visits are recommended as determined to be medically necessary. The need for clinical office visit with a health care provider is individualized based upon the review of patient concerns, signs, symptoms, clinical stability and reasonable physician judgment. The determination is also based on what medications the patient is taking, since some medications such as opiates, or medicines such as certain antibiotics, require close monitoring. As patient conditions are extremely varied, a set number of office visits per condition cannot be reasonably established. The determination of necessity for an office visit requires individualized case review and assessment, being ever mindful that the best patient outcomes are achieved with eventual patient independence from health care system through self care as soon as clinically feasible" The request for 6 Monthly Sessions of Psychotropic Medication Management is excessive and not medically necessary as the injured worker is being prescribed Ativan and Restoril which are not indicated for use beyond 4 weeks. The injured worker would need to be weaned off the Benzodiazepine medications which should be completed in less than 6 office visits.

Ativan 0.5mg #60: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topic: Benzodiazepine, Weaning of medications Page(s): 24, 124.

Decision rationale: MTUS states "Benzodiazepines are 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. Upon review of the Primary Treating Physicians' Progress Reports, the injured worker has been prescribed Ativan 0.5 mg twice daily on an ongoing basis with no documented plan of taper. The MTUS guidelines state that the use of benzodiazepines should be limited to 4 weeks only. Thus, the request for Ativan 0.5mg #60 is excessive and not medically necessary.

Restoril 30mg #30: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines, Benzodiazepines.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topic: Benzodiazepine, Weaning of medications Page(s): 24.

Decision rationale: MTUS states "Benzodiazepines are 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. Upon review of the Primary Treating Physicians' Progress Reports, the injured worker has been prescribed Restoril 30mg #30 nightly for insomnia on an ongoing basis with no documented plan of taper. The MTUS guidelines state that the use of benzodiazepines should be limited to 4 weeks only. Thus, the request for Restoril 30mg #30 is excessive and not medically necessary.