

Case Number:	CM15-0033133		
Date Assigned:	02/26/2015	Date of Injury:	07/17/1998
Decision Date:	04/08/2015	UR Denial Date:	01/20/2015
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

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 42 year old female who sustained an industrial injury on 07/17/1998. Diagnoses include paraplegia, fracture thoracic spine, status post-surgical fusion, ovarian failure, and osteoporosis in bilateral hips and lumbar spine. Treatment to date has included medications. A physician progress note dated 11/12/2014 documents the injured worker complains of chronic pain in her shoulders and back as well as her right wrist. She also has some pain in the fingers in her left hand. There is no note present for 11/17/2014 Treatment requested is for Retrospective: Flurbiprofen/Lidocaine/Amitriptyline (DOS: 11/17/14), and Retrospective: Gabapentin/Cyclobenzaprine/Tramadol (DOS: 11/17/14). On 01/20/2015 Utilization Review non-certified the request for Flurbiprofen/Lidocaine/Amitriptyline (DOS: 11/17/14), and Retrospective: Gabapentin/Cyclobenzaprine/Tramadol (DOS: 11/17/14) and cited was California Medical Treatment Utilization Schedule-Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Retrospective: Flurbiprofen/Lidocaine/Amitriptyline (DOS: 11/17/14): Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111-113.

Decision rationale: Regarding the request for flurbiprofen/lidocaine/amitriptyline, CA MTUS states that topical compound medications require guideline support for all components of the compound in order for the compound to be approved. Topical NSAIDs are indicated for "Osteoarthritis and tendinitis, in particular, that of the knee and elbow or other joints that are amenable to topical treatment: Recommended for short-term use (4-12 weeks). There is little evidence to utilize topical NSAIDs for treatment of osteoarthritis of the spine, hip or shoulder. Neuropathic pain: Not recommended as there is no evidence to support use." Topical lidocaine is "Recommended for localized peripheral pain after there has been evidence of a trial of first-line therapy (tri-cyclic or SNRI anti-depressants or an AED such as gabapentin or Lyrica)." Additionally, it is supported only as a dermal patch. Within the documentation available for review, none of the abovementioned criteria have been documented. Furthermore, there is no clear rationale for the use of topical medications rather than the FDA-approved oral forms for this patient. Given all of the above, the requested flurbiprofen/lidocaine/amitriptyline is not medically necessary.

Retrospective: Gabapentin/Cyclobenzaprine/Tramadol (DOS: 11/17/14): Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111-113.

Decision rationale: Regarding the request for gabapentin/cyclobenzaprine/tramadol, CA MTUS states that topical compound medications require guideline support for all components of the compound in order for the compound to be approved. Muscle relaxants and antiepilepsy drugs are not supported by the CA MTUS for topical use. Within the documentation available for review, there is no clear rationale for the use of topical medications rather than the FDA-approved oral forms for this patient given that various components are not supported for topical use per the CA MTUS. Given all of the above, the requested gabapentin/cyclobenzaprine /tramadol is not medically necessary.