

Case Number:	CM15-0033854		
Date Assigned:	02/27/2015	Date of Injury:	03/18/2004
Decision Date:	04/07/2015	UR Denial Date:	02/02/2015
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: Massachusetts

Certification(s)/Specialty: Anesthesiology, 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:

This 32-year-old male reported a work-related injury on 03/18/2004. According to the progress notes from the treating provider dated 1/12/15, the injured worker (IW) reports ongoing low back pain with radiculopathy and right upper extremity pain; both issues are stated to be improved by the Oxycontin and the Neurontin. The IW was diagnosed with chronic lumbar pain with radiculopathy and chronic right hand pain with history of multiple hand surgeries. Previous treatments include medications and surgery. The treating provider requests Oxycontin 60mg, #85 and an unknown prescription for Neurontin. The Utilization Review on 02/02/2015 non-certified the request for an unknown prescription for Neurontin and modified the request for Oxycontin 60mg to allow #10. The references cited were CA MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Oxycotin 60mg #85: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids on Going Management Page(s): 74-97.

Decision rationale: According to the MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines section on Opioids, On-Going Management, p 74-97, (a) Prescriptions from a single practitioner taken as directed, and all prescriptions from a single pharmacy. (b) The lowest possible dose should be prescribed to improve pain and function. (c) Office: Ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects. Pain assessment should include: current pain; the least reported pain over the period since last assessment; average pain; intensity of pain after taking the opioid; how long it takes for pain relief; and how long pain relief lasts. Satisfactory response to treatment may be indicated by the injured worker's decreased pain, increased level of function, or improved quality of life. Information from family members or other caregivers should be considered in determining the injured worker's response to treatment. The 4 A's for Ongoing Monitoring: Four domains have been proposed as most relevant for ongoing monitoring of chronic pain injured workers on opioids: pain relief, side effects, physical and psychosocial functioning, and the occurrence of any potentially aberrant (or nonadherent) drug-related behaviors. These domains have been summarized as the "4 A's" (analgesia, activities of daily living, adverse side effects, and aberrant drug taking behaviors). The monitoring of these outcomes over time should affect therapeutic decisions and provide a framework for documentation of the clinical use of these controlled drugs. (Passik, 2000) (d) Home: To aid in pain and functioning assessment, the injured worker should be requested to keep a pain diary that includes entries such as pain triggers, and incidence of end-of-dose pain. It should be emphasized that using this diary will help in tailoring the opioid dose. This should not be a requirement for pain management. (e) Use of drug screening or injured worker treatment with issues of abuse, addiction, or poor pain control. (f) Documentation of misuse of medications (doctor-shopping, uncontrolled drug escalation, drug diversion). (g) Continuing review of overall situation with regard to nonopioid means of pain control. (h) Consideration of a consultation with a multidisciplinary pain clinic if doses of opioids are required beyond what is usually required for the condition or pain does not improve on opioids in 3 months. Consider a psych consult if there is evidence of depression, anxiety or irritability. Additionally, the MTUS states that continued use of opioids requires (a) the injured worker has returned to work, (b) the injured worker has improved functioning and pain. There is no current documentation of baseline pain, pain score with use of opioids, functional improvement on current regimen, side effects or review of potentially aberrant drug taking behaviors as outlined in the MTUS and as required for ongoing treatment. Therefore, at this time, the requirements for treatment have not been met and medical necessity has not been established.

Unknown prescription for Neurontin: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Neurontin (Gabapentin).

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Gabapentin Page(s): 18.

Decision rationale: Gabapentin, p 18 According to the MTUS, Gabapentin (Neurontin, Gabarone, generic available) has been shown to be effective for treatment of diabetic painful neuropathy and postherpetic neuralgia and has been considered as a first-line treatment for neuropathic pain. Gabapentin is also recommended for spinal cord injury, CRPS, fibromyalgia, and lumbar spinal stenosis. According to the documents available for review, the injured worker has none of the aforementioned MTUS approved indications for the use of this medication. Further, no specific dose or dosing regimen is requested. Therefore, at this time, the requirements for treatment have not been met and medical necessity has not been established.