

Case Number:	CM15-0039263		
Date Assigned:	03/09/2015	Date of Injury:	04/10/2009
Decision Date:	04/21/2015	UR Denial Date:	02/11/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	03/02/2015

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: Pennsylvania, Ohio, California
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

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 57-year-old male sustained a work related injury on 04/10/2009. According to a handwritten partially illegible progress report dated 02/03/2015, the injured worker was there because rehab was no longer approved. Objective findings were noted as unchanged. The provider noted that Norco helped some. Diagnoses included neck pain and lower back pain. Treatment plan included Norco and Naprosyn. Documentation submitted for review went back to 10/2014. The injured worker was utilizing Norco at that time. According to progress report dated 11/20/2014, the injured worker rated pain 8 on a scale of 1-10 while utilizing Norco.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Norco 10/325mg #90: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Short acting opioids.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids/ Ongoing Management Opioids for Chronic Pain Page(s): 78, 80.

Decision rationale: MTUS discusses in detail the 4 As of opioid management, emphasizing the importance of dose titration vs. functional improvement and documentation of objective, verifiable functional benefit to support an indication for ongoing opioid use. MTUS also discourages the use of chronic opioids for back pain due to probable lack of efficacy. The records in this case do not meet these 4As of opioid management and do not provide a rationale or diagnosis overall, for which ongoing opioid use is supported. Therefore, this request is not medically necessary.