

Case Number:	CM15-0039319		
Date Assigned:	03/09/2015	Date of Injury:	12/06/2010
Decision Date:	04/17/2015	UR Denial Date:	02/20/2015
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: Florida
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Neurology, 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 53-year-old female sustained an industrial injury on 12/6/10, with subsequent ongoing right lower extremity, neck and back pain. Treatment included medications, magnetic resonance imaging scans, physical therapy and epidural steroid injections. In a PR-2 dated 1/26/15, the injured worker complained of pain to the neck, low back, right upper extremity, right hip, right knee and right ankle associated with right upper extremity tingling, numbness and weakness. Current diagnoses included cervical radiculitis, thoracic spine sprain/strain, lumbar radiculitis, right shoulder bursitis, chronic pain, myofascial pain syndrome and opioid allergy - multiple. The treatment plan included continuing home exercise program, follow-up in two months and medications (Tramadol, Oxymorphone, Flexeril and Percocet).

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Tramadol 50 mg qty: 1: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation official disability guidelines - pain, opioids.

Decision rationale: The medical records report ongoing pain that is helped subjectively by continued use of opioid. The medical records do not indicate or document any formal opioid risk mitigation tool use or assessment or indicate use of UDS or other risk tool. ODG supports 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 patient'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 patient's response to treatment. The 4A's for Ongoing Monitoring: Four domains have been proposed as most relevant for ongoing monitoring of chronic pain patients on opioids: pain relief, side effects, physical and psychosocial functioning, and the occurrence of any potentially aberrant (or non-adherent) 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. Given the medical records do not document such ongoing monitoring; the medical records do not support the continued use of opioids such as norco.

Cyclobenzaprine 5mg qty: 1: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines flexeril Page(s): 41.

Decision rationale: MTUS guidelines support the use of flexeril for short-term therapy for treatment of muscle spasms. The medical records provided for review indicate treatment with flexeril (orphenadrine) but does not document/ indicate specific functional benefit or duration of any benefit in regard to muscle relaxant effect. As such the medical records do not demonstrate objective functional benefit or demonstrate intent to treat with short term therapy in congruence with guidelines.

Percocet 5/325mg qty: 1: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation official disability guidelines - pain, opioids.

Decision rationale: The medical records report ongoing pain that is helped subjectively by continued use of opioid. The medical records do not indicate or document any formal opioid risk mitigation tool use or assessment or indicate use of UDS or other risk tool. ODG supports 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 patient'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 patient's response to treatment. The 4A's for Ongoing Monitoring: Four domains have been proposed as most relevant for ongoing monitoring of chronic pain patients on opioids: pain relief, side effects, physical and psychosocial functioning, and the occurrence of any potentially aberrant (or non-adherent) drug-related behaviors. These domains have been summarized as the "4A'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. Given the medical records do not document such ongoing monitoring; the medical records do not support the continued use of opioids such as Norco.