

Case Number:	CM15-0043892		
Date Assigned:	03/12/2015	Date of Injury:	08/03/1998
Decision Date:	04/23/2015	UR Denial Date:	02/26/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	03/09/2015

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

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 67 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on 8/03/1998. The mechanism of injury was not noted. The injured worker was diagnosed as having lumbago. Treatment to date has included conservative measures. A progress report, dated 9/11/2012, noted the use of MS Contin 30mg. Currently, the injured worker complains of chronic low back pain, noted as stable on Morphine. Objective findings included no changes. Current medications were not noted. The treatment plan included MS Contin 30mg two to three times daily. The previous PR2 reports, dated 1/23/2015 and 12/23/2014, noted no changes on physical exam. A previous Utilization Review decision regarding MS Contin, dated 12/01/2014, was noted with recommendation modification for weaning.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

1 prescription of Morphine Sulfate (MS) Contin 30mg #75: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, Morphine sulfate; Long-term Users of Opioids (6 months or more).

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Criteria for Use of Opioids Page(s): 76-78, 88-89.

Decision rationale: According to the 02/23/2015 hand written report, this patient presents with chronic low back pain. The current request is for 1 prescription of Morphine Sulfate (MS) Contin 30mg #75. This medication was first mentioned in the 01/02/2014 report; it is unknown exactly when the patient initially started taking this medication. The request for authorization is on 02/23/2015. The patient's work status is to remain off work. For chronic opiate use, MTUS Guidelines pages 88 and 89 states, "Pain should be assessed at each visit, and functioning should be measured at 6-month intervals using a numerical scale or validated instrument." MTUS page 78 also requires documentation of the 4A's; analgesia, ADLs, adverse side effects, and aberrant behavior, as well as "pain assessment" or outcome measures that include current pain, average pain, least pain, intensity of pain after taking the opioid, time it takes for medication to work and duration of pain relief. In reviewing the provided reports from 01/02/2014 to 02/23/2015, the treating physician simply documented in the subjective complaint "LBP" and the treatment plan "continue MS Contin". In this case, the documentation provided by the treating physician does not show any pain assessment and no numerical scale is used describing the patient's function. No specific ADL's or return to work are discussed. No aberrant drug seeking behavior is discussed, and no discussion regarding side effects is found in the records provided. The treating physician has failed to clearly document the 4 A's as required by MTUS. Therefore, the request IS NOT medically necessary and the patient should be slowly weaned per MTUS.