

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0056493		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	04/01/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	05/15/2011
<b>Decision Date:</b>	05/06/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	03/10/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	03/24/2015

### 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: Family Practice

### 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 59 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 5/15/2011. She reported a slip and fall. The injured worker was diagnosed as having headache, neck pain, right shoulder pain and low back pain. There is no record of a recent diagnostic study. Treatment to date has included physical therapy and medication management. In a progress note dated 2/17/2015, the injured worker complains of neck and back pain. The treating physician is requesting Norco.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Norco 5/325mg #180:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids, Ongoing Management Page(s): 78.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Criteria for use of opioids, page(s) 110-115.

**Decision rationale:** In accordance with California MTUS guidelines, narcotics for chronic pain management should be continued if (a) If the patient has returned to work, (b) If the patient has

improved functioning and pain. MTUS guidelines also recommend that narcotic medications only be prescribed for chronic pain when there is evidence of a pain management contract being upheld with proof of frequent urine drug screens. Regarding this patient's case, she is noted on a 2/2015 progress note to have had a drug screen negative for opiates which is suspicious for aberrant behavior. There is not adequate documentation of objective proof of improved pain and functioning. Likewise, this request is not considered medically necessary.