

Case Number:	CM14-0118741		
Date Assigned:	09/16/2014	Date of Injury:	02/04/1999
Decision Date:	10/21/2014	UR Denial Date:	06/27/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	07/29/2014

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. The expert reviewer is Board Certified in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, has a subspecialty in Pain Medicine and is licensed to practice in California. 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/services. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

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 records presented for review indicate that this 51 year old male was reportedly injured on February 4, 1999. The mechanism of injury is noted as a slip on the lower step of the shuttle bus. The most recent progress note, dated June 20, 2014, indicates that there were ongoing complaints of pain in the lumbar spine. The physical examination demonstrated painful extension of the lumbar spine, tenderness to palpation along the lower 3 facet joints bilaterally with pain reproduced upon loading of the lumbar facet joints, good strength was noted in the lower extremities and the claimant can stand on the toes and heels without difficulty, and no neurologic abnormalities were noted. Diagnostic imaging studies include a CT scan of the thoracic spine, revealing vacuum phenomena, mild, right, and moderate left facet arthropathy, and bilateral facet degenerative changes at T6-7-5-6. Additionally, a CT scan of the lumbar spine in July 22, 2013 demonstrates moderate bilateral facet arthropathy at L5 to S1, a decompressive laminectomy with moderate bilateral foraminal compromise and solid fusion L4 to L5, and 85 percent disc height loss at L3 to L4 with 6 millimeter retrolisthesis, and moderate bilateral ligament template from buckling with right and left facet joint instability. At L2 to L3 ligamentum flavum thickening, and a dorsal disc bulge of 2 millimeters and mild bilateral foraminal compromise is noted. Previous treatment includes and L4 to L5 fusion, a spinal cord stimulator medial branch blocks, rhizotomy, pharmacotherapy, and activity modifications. A request was made for a topical compounding medication containing Ketoprofen powder, Baclofen powder, Cyclobenzaprine powder, Gabapentin powder, Bupivacaine powder, HCL powder, and PCCA Lidoderm cream base and was not medically necessary in the preauthorization process on June 27, 2014.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Compound medication purchase - Ketoprofen powder, baclofen powder, cyclobenzaprine powder HCL, gabapentin powder, bupivacaine powder, pcca lipoder cream base: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 111-112.

Decision rationale: MTUS Chronic Pain Guidelines state that topical analgesics are largely experimental and that any compound product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended, is not recommended. Additionally, the guidelines state there is no evidence to support the use of topical Gabapentin or any muscle relaxant, and topical compound form. Therefore, this request is not supported by the guidelines and is not considered medically necessary.