

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0139189		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	09/05/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	05/09/2013
<b>Decision Date:</b>	10/28/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	08/12/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	08/28/2014

### 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 Anesthesiology, has a subspecialty in Pain Management and is licensed to practice in Georgia. 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 claimant presents with chronic pain following a work related injury on 05/09/2013. The claimant presented with low back pain. On 1/3/2014, the physical exam showed limited range of motion of the thoracolumbar spine, and decreased Achilles' reflexes bilaterally. The provider noted that the claimant benefits from occasional medications and planned to taper them. The claimant has been performing physical therapy. A claim was made for Ultram and Vicoprofen.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Ultram 50mg tab #25 with 4 refills:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids, criteria for use Page(s): 94.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Tramadol Page(s): 83.

**Decision rationale:** Ultram 50mg tab #25 with 4 refills is not medically necessary. Ultram is Tramadol, a centrally- acting opioid. Per MTUS page 83, opioids for chronic pain is recommended for short-term use after failure of first line non-pharmacologic and medication option including Acetaminophen and NSAIDS. Additionally, Page 79 of MTUS guidelines states that weaning of opioids are recommended if (a) there are no overall improvement in function,

unless there are extenuating circumstances (b) continuing pain with evidence of intolerable adverse effects (c) decrease in functioning (d) resolution of pain (e) if serious non-adherence is occurring (f) the patient requests discontinuing. The claimant's medical records did not document that there was an overall improvement in function or a return to work with previous opioid therapy. In fact, the claimant continued to report pain. Given Tramadol is a synthetic opioid, its use in this case is not medically necessary. The claimant has long-term use with this medication and there was a lack of improved function or return to work with this opioid and all other medications. The request is not medically necessary.

**Vicoprofen 7.5/200mg tab #15 with 4 refills:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids, criteria for use Page(s): 76-78.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 79.

**Decision rationale:** Vicoprofen 7.5/200mg tab #15 with 4 refills is not medically necessary. Per MTUS Page 79 of MTUS guidelines states that weaning of opioids are recommended if (a) there are no overall improvement in function, unless there are extenuating circumstances (b) continuing pain with evidence of intolerable adverse effects (c) decrease in functioning (d) resolution of pain (e) if serious non-adherence is occurring (f) the patient requests discontinuing. The claimant's medical records did not document that there was an overall improvement in function or a return to work with previous opioid therapy. The claimant has long-term use with this medication and there was a lack of documentation of improved function with this opioid. In fact the claimant was designated permanent and stationary; therefore the requested medication is not medically necessary.