MAXIMUS Federal Services

Case Number:	CM14-0162365		
Date Assigned:	10/07/2014	Date of Injury:	03/17/2011
Decision Date:	11/07/2014	UR Denial Date:	09/23/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/02/2014

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 Occupational Medicine and is licensed to practice in Ohio. 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:

Individual is a 41 year old male with a 3-17-11 date of industrial injury. He has been diagnosed with cervicobrachial syndrome. Individual presents 7-2-14 complaining of neck and upper left extremity pain, rated as a 2 out of 10 if medicated. Cervical spine scar noted, anterior cervical discectomy and fusion in 2012. Range of cervical motion is noted as decreased. Tenderness and spasm were noted in the paraspinal cervical muscles and spinal process pain noted at C5-6, as well (objective). Pertinent medications: Norco 10-325mg and cyclobenzaprine 7.5mg tablet prescribed for pain and discomfort and Colace and Senokot prescribed for constipation. Individual states that he is managing his constipation with water, fiber, and flaxseed. A request for Colace 100mg #60 with 5 refills is being considered.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Colace 100mg #60 with five refills: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines, Treatment Index, 12th Edition (web), Pain, Opioid-Induced constipation treatment

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids, Page(s): 77. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain

(Chronic), Opioid-induced constipation treatment Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence: UpToDate.com, Docusate and Senna

Decision rationale: Colace or Docusate is a stool softener that makes bowel movements softer and easier to pass. Opioids can commonly cause constipation and treatment to prevent constipation is recommended. According to his most recent records, the individual is prescribed Norco 10-325mg on an as needed basis. The chart does not discuss any further reason why the individual is experiencing constipation, so it must be concluded that the constipation is secondary to opioid use. ODG states that first line treatment should include "physical activity, appropriate hydration by drinking enough water, and advising the patient to follow a proper diet, rich in fiber" and "some laxatives may help to stimulate gastric motility. Other over-the-counter medications can help loosen otherwise hard stools, add bulk, and increase water content of the stool". Uptodate states "Patients who respond poorly to fiber, or who do not tolerate it, may require laxatives other than bulk forming agents." Additionally, "There is little evidence to support the use of surfactant agents in chronic constipation. Colace is intended to lower the surface tension of stool, thereby allowing water to more easily enter the stool. Although these agents have few side effects, they are less effective than other laxatives". The medical records did discuss that the individual does use flaxseed and fiber to help with the constipation. It does mention he was encouraged to maintain a high fiber diet and to drink large quantities of water. A home exercise program was documented as well. The treating physician did not report how compliant the patient was to the first line constipation treatment. The individual does say that his constipation is managed by water consumption, fiber, and flaxseed. Additionally, no quantitative or qualitative description of bowel movement frequency/difficulty was provided either pre or post "conspitation treatment education" by the physician. Lastly, according to UpToDate, there is little evidence to support the use of surfactant agents, such as colace, in the treatment of chronic constipation. Colace 100mg #60 with 5 refills is deemed not medically necessary.