

Case Number:	CM14-0163895		
Date Assigned:	10/08/2014	Date of Injury:	12/04/1998
Decision Date:	11/04/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/06/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/06/2014

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 & Rehabilitation 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:

According to the records made available for review, this is a 55-year-old male with a 12/4/98 date of injury. At the time (9/23/14) of request for authorization for Valium 5mg #15 with 3 refills, there is documentation of subjective (low back and bilateral lower extremities pain, severe muscle spasms, and weakness and loss of balance) and objective (not specified) findings, current diagnoses (failed back syndrome, disc herniation with annular tear at L3-4, status post positive discography, bilateral carpal tunnel syndrome, and status post lumbar fusion of L4-5), and treatment to date (medications (including ongoing treatment with Valium since at least 3/11/14)). There is no documentation of the intention to treat over a short course and functional benefit or improvement as a reduction in work restrictions; an increase in activity tolerance; and/or a reduction in the use of medications as a result of Valium use to date.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Valium 5mg #15 with 3 refills: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 24.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines BENZODIAZEPINES Page(s): 24.

Decision rationale: MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines identifies that benzodiazepines are not recommended for long-term and that most guidelines limit use to 4 weeks. MTUS-Definitions identifies that any treatment intervention should not be continued in the absence of functional benefit or improvement as a reduction in work restrictions; an increase in activity tolerance; and/or a reduction in the use of medications or medical services. Within the medical information available for review, there is documentation of diagnoses of failed back syndrome, disc herniation with annular tear at L3-4, status post positive discography, bilateral carpal tunnel syndrome, and status post lumbar fusion of L4-5. However, given documentation of ongoing treatment with Valium since at least 3/11/14 and a request for Valium #15 with 3 refills, there is no documentation of the intention to treat over a short course. In addition, there is no documentation of functional benefit or improvement as a reduction in work restrictions; an increase in activity tolerance; and/or a reduction in the use of medications as a result of Valium use to date. Therefore, based on guidelines and a review of the evidence, the request for Valium 5mg #15 with 3 refills is not medically necessary.