

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0177572		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	10/31/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	02/23/2009
<b>Decision Date:</b>	12/09/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	10/22/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	10/27/2014

### 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 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 injured worker is a represented [REDACTED] insured who has filed a claim for chronic low back, hip, ankle, knee, and leg pain reportedly associated with an industrial injury of February 23, 2009. Thus far, the injured worker has been treated with the following: Analgesic medications; transfer of care to and from various providers in various specialties; and unspecified amounts of physical therapy over the course of the claim. In a Utilization Review Report dated October 22, 2014, the claims administrator partially approved a request for Celebrex, partially approved a request for gabapentin, denied Viagra outright, and denied AcipHex. It appeared that gabapentin was being partially approved for weaning purposes. The denial of Viagra appeared to be internally inconsistent and was very difficult to follow. The claims administrator wrote that the injured worker did not "complain of any side effects in recent reporting to warrant phosphodiesterase 5 inhibitor." The claims administrator then stated in another section that the injured worker was using Viagra to combat sexual dysfunction associated with gabapentin. The claims administrator then stated that the injured worker did not have any gastrointestinal issues present which would warrant provision of AcipHex. In an October 6, 2014 progress note, the injured worker ongoing complaints of left ankle, foot, and calf pain. The injured worker was using AcipHex, Celebrex, gabapentin, Viagra, and Flexeril. The injured worker was status post multiple ankle surgeries. The injured worker was obese; with a BMI of 35 and had limited lower extremity strength was appreciated. The injured worker was given diagnosis of leg pain and reflex sympathetic dystrophy of the leg. 6/10 pain with medications versus 9/10 pain without medications was noted. The attending provider stated that the injured worker would be essentially bedridden without his medications, stating that the injured worker found it difficult to walk from the bed to the restroom in his home. The attending provider then stated that 10 sessions of pain coping skill classes were also being sought

for chronic pain concerns. The attending provider stated that the injured worker was using AcipHex for gastro intestinal (GI) upset secondary to medication consumption. It was stated that Viagra was being employed to ameliorate sexual side effects associated with gabapentin usage. The attending provider stated that gabapentin was beneficial but did not elaborate on the extent of the same. The note was difficult to follow and mingled old complaints and current complaints. The attending provider stated that daily activities were more tolerable with gabapentin but did not expound or elaborate on the nature of the same. In a September 8, 2014 progress note, the injured worker reported ongoing complaints of left leg pain. The injured worker was reportedly using AcipHex, Celebrex, Neurontin, Viagra, and Celebrex, it was stated. The injured worker stated that he would have difficulty walking without his medications and suggested that he would be bedridden without his medications. It was again stated that AcipHex was being employed for GI upset secondary to medications, Flexeril for muscle spasm, Celebrex for anti-inflammatory effect, and gabapentin for neuropathic pain. The injured worker was placed off of work, on total temporary disability.

### **IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES**

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

**Celebrex 200mg #30: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Celebrex, NSAIDs.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Anti-inflammatory Medications Topic, Functional Restoration Approach to Chronic Pain Management.

**Decision rationale:** While page 22 of the MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines does acknowledge that COX-2 inhibitors such as Celebrex are recommended in injured workers who have gastrointestinal (GI) complications which would prevent provision of non-selective NSAIDs, such as Motrin or naproxen. This recommendation is qualified by commentary made on page 7 of the MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines to the effect that an attending provider should incorporate some discussion of medication efficacy into his choice of recommendations. The attending provider's documentation did not outline any tangible or material evidence of improvement with ongoing Celebrex usage. The injured worker remains off of work, on total temporary disability, despite ongoing usage of Celebrex. The injured worker continues to exhibit issues with a significant limp and gait derangement. The injured worker's comments to the effect that he would be bedridden without his medications do not, in and of themselves, constitute substantive improvement with the same. The fact that the injured worker remains off of work, on total temporary disability, moreover, implies a lack of functional improvement as defined in MTUS 972.20f, despite ongoing usage of Celebrex. Therefore, the request is not medically necessary.

**Gabapentin 600mg #180: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Gabapentin (Neurontin), Anti-Epilepsy Drugs (AEDs).

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Gabapentin section Page(s): 19.

**Decision rationale:** As noted on page 19 of the MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, injured workers using gabapentin should be asked "at each visit" as to whether there have been improvements in pain and/or function achieved as a result of the same. In this case, the injured worker is off of work, on total temporary disability. While the attending provider has reported some reduction in pain scores from 9/10 to 6/10 with medication consumption, however, the injured worker has not returned to any form of work. In addition, the injured worker is having side effects to include sexual dysfunction with gabapentin usage, and is still having difficulty performing activities of daily living, despite ongoing gabapentin usage. All of the foregoing taken together suggests a lack of functional improvement as defined in MTUS 9792.20f, despite ongoing usage of gabapentin. Therefore, the request is not medically necessary.

**Viagra 50mg #10:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Wespes E, Amar E, Eardley F, Gluliano F, Hatzichristou D, Hatzimouratidis K, Montorsi F, Vardi Y. Guidelines on Male Sexual Dysfunction: Erectile Dysfunction and Premature Ejaculation. Arnhem, The Netherlands: European Association of Urology (EAU); 2009 Mar. 50 page.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation American Urologic Association (AUA), Guideline on the Management of Erectile Dysfunction.

**Decision rationale:** The MTUS does not address the topic. The American Urologic Association (AUA) does acknowledge that 5 phosphodiesterase inhibitors, such as Viagra, do represent the first line of therapy for erectile dysfunction. As is reportedly present here, this recommendation is qualified by further commentary made by the AUA to the effect that injured workers using 5 phosphodiesterase inhibitors, such as Viagra, should be periodically followed up upon to ascertain "efficacy." However, in this case the attending provider has not clearly outlined or stated whether or not ongoing usage of Viagra has proven beneficial in ameliorating the injured worker's symptoms of erectile dysfunction. Based on the lack of documentation and guidelines, this request is not medically necessary.

**Aciphex 20mg #30 with 3 refills:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAIDs, GI Symptoms & Cardiovascular Risk.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAIDs, GI Symptoms, and Cardiovascular Risk topic, NSAIDs, GI Symptoms, and Cardiovascular Risk.

**Decision rationale:** While page 69 of the MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines does acknowledge that proton pump inhibitors such as AcipHex are indicated in the treatment of NSAID-induced dyspepsia, as appears/appeared to have been present here. This recommendation is likewise qualified by commentary made on page 7 of the MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines to the effect that an attending provider should incorporate some discussion of medication efficacy into his choice of recommendations. However, the attending provider has not stated whether or not ongoing usage of AcipHex has proven beneficial in attenuating or ameliorating the injured worker's symptoms of reflux and heartburn. Based on the lack of documentation and the guidelines, this request is not medically necessary.