

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0095176		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	09/15/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	04/29/2009
<b>Decision Date:</b>	10/06/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	05/30/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	06/23/2014

### 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:

There were 96 pages for this review. The request was for a compound cream. The request for independent medical review was signed on June 23, 2014. Per the records provided, the patient is a 54-year-old man who was injured back in 2009. The diagnoses were headache, brachial neuritis/radiculitis, neck sprain-strain, lumbar disc protrusion, spinal stenosis and radiculopathy, left elbow medial epicondylitis, left knee sprain-strain, right knee meniscus tear, anxiety, depression and stress. The MRI results were provided. On January 8, 2013 the patient had a therapeutic percutaneous epidural decompression neuroplasty of the lumbosacral nerve roots at L4-L5 and L5-S1 as well as bilateral facet joint injections at L4-L5 and L5-S1. There were previous peer reviews with modifications of request for Norco. The patient did not report side effects with oral medicines. The pain without the medicine was a nine out of 10 and with medicine it is at 5 to 6 out of 10. A TENS unit was recommended. He was administered Toradol injections. The records did not establish the patient was unable to tolerate oral medicines. The patient as of March 28, 2014 complaints of constant headaches rated six out of 10, constant neck pain with radiation.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Flurbi (NAP) cream 180 grams: Flurbiprofen 20%, lidocaine 5% and Amitriptyline 4%.: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines: Topical Analgesics.

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

**Decision rationale:** The MTUS notes topical analgesic compounds are largely experimental in use with few randomized controlled trials to determine efficacy or safety. Experimental treatments should not be used for claimant medical care. MTUS notes they are primarily recommended for neuropathic pain when trials of antidepressants and anticonvulsants have failed, but in this case, it is not clear what primary medicines had been tried and failed. Also, there is little to no research to support the use of many of these agents. Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended, is not certifiable. This compounded medicine contains several medicines untested in the peer review literature for effectiveness of use topically. Moreover, the MTUS notes that the use of these compounded agents requires knowledge of the specific analgesic effect of each agent and how it will be useful for the specific therapeutic goal required. The provider did not describe each of the agents, and how they would be useful in this claimant's case for specific goals. The request is appropriately non-certified.