

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM13-0072099		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	01/08/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	12/31/2009
<b>Decision Date:</b>	03/26/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	12/26/2013
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	12/30/2013

### 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. 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/Service. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

The Expert Reviewer has the following credentials:

State(s) of Licensure: California

Certification(s)/Specialty: Preventive Medicine, Occupational Medicine, Pediatrics

### 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 patient is a 62 year old female who was injured on 12/31/2009. She was emptying boxes. She lunged forward to help catch a box and this movement caused pain in her herniated discs and caused impingement on the nerve roots. Her diagnoses are lumbar spine myofasciitis, psych was deferred, medication induced gastritis, and sleep disturbance Prior treatment history has included sleeping medication and aquatic therapy. Her past medications included Vicodin, Norco, Flexeril, Zanaflex, Cymbalta, and Gabapentin. The patient underwent facet blocks at L3-4; L4-5 and L5-S1 on 12/16/2010 without improvement. Diagnostic studies reviewed include EMG/NCV performed on 01/31/2012 revealed multilevel lumbar radiculopathy involving L4-5, L5-S1. EMG/NCV nerve conduction studies performed on 12/14/2010 were normal. PR2 dated 12/12/2013 documented the patient to have complaints of continued severe low back, right-sided hip, and right buttock pain that is constantly aching and radiates down the right leg. She was approved for acupuncture originally. She has shown significant relief with her TENS unit. The patient stated this was the only way that she could keep from taking so much pain medication and to continue to work and even have physical therapy. Objective findings on exam revealed tenderness to the lumbar spine paravertebral muscles with spasm. She had tenderness to the right sciatic notch and a positive sciatic tension test. She had a slightly guarded gait and had a mild limp favoring the right lower extremity. The treating provider has requested Gabapentin 300mg # 90.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Prescription of Gabapentin 300mg, #90:** Overturned

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Gabapentin (Neurontin).

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 13.

**Decision rationale:** This 62 yr. old female was on gabapentin for neuropathic pain for her chronic back pain with radiculopathy. The medication is part of her medical regimen and per California MTUS Guidelines 2009 anti-epilepsy medications are a first line treatment for neuropathic pain. A recommended trial period for an adequate trial of gabapentin is three to eight weeks for titration, then one to two weeks at maximum tolerated dosage. The patient has been prescribed the medication and the medical record documents a positive response. She reported side effects on the present dose but has been recommended to decrease the amount. Medical necessity has been documented and the requested treatment is medically necessary for treatment of the patient's chronic pain condition.