

Case Number:	CM14-0190335		
Date Assigned:	11/21/2014	Date of Injury:	04/01/2004
Decision Date:	01/09/2015	UR Denial Date:	10/16/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/14/2014

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:

According to the records made available for review, this is a 53-year-old female with a 4/1/04 date of injury. At the time (10/16/14) of the Decision for Hydromorphone 2mg, #90, there is documentation of subjective (neck and back pain) and objective (positive straight leg raise bilaterally, tenderness to palpation over the lumbar facet, positive trigger point in the paraspinal muscles, and pain with lumbar extension) findings, current diagnoses (failed back surgery syndrome, migraine, lumbar radiculopathy, and fibromyalgia), and treatment to date (epidural steroid injections and medications (including ongoing treatment with Dialudid since 3/31/14)). Medical Reports identify a signed Narcotic agreement. 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 Hydromorphone use to date.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Hydromorphone 2mg, #90: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 74-80. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence: Title 8, California Code of Regulations, section 9792.20

Decision rationale: MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines necessitate documentation that the prescriptions are from a single practitioner and are taken as directed; the lowest possible dose is being prescribed; and there will be ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects, as criteria necessary to support the medical necessity of opioids. 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 surgery syndrome, migraine, lumbar radiculopathy, and fibromyalgia. In addition, given documentation of a signed Narcotic agreement, there is documentation that the prescriptions are from a single practitioner and are taken as directed; the lowest possible dose is being prescribed; and there will be ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects. However, given documentation of ongoing treatment with Hydromorphone, 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 Hydromorphone use to date. Therefore, based on guidelines and a review of the evidence, the request for Hydromorphone 2mg, #90 is not medically necessary.