

Case Number:	CM14-0218165		
Date Assigned:	01/07/2015	Date of Injury:	07/27/2011
Decision Date:	03/13/2015	UR Denial Date:	12/16/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	12/30/2014

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. 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: North Carolina, Georgia
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Family Practice

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 36 year old male who sustained an industrial injury on July 27, 2011. He has reported low back pain and left shoulder pain and has been diagnosed with lumbar spine nerve root compromise, lumbar stenosis, and left shoulder sprain/strain. Treatment to date has included acupuncture therapy and medications. Currently the injured worker complains of sharp, stabbing, throbbing low back pain radiating to bilateral legs and sharp left shoulder pain. The treatment plan included a urine drug screen and medications. On December 16, 2014 Utilization Review non certified a urine drug screen citing the MTUS guidelines.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Urine Drug Screen: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Drug Testing; and Opioids, Criteria for Use Page(s): 43, 78.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Section 2 Page(s): 77-78. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Pain

Decision rationale: CA MTUS recommends the consideration of drug screening before initiation of opioid therapy and intermittently during treatment. An exact frequency of urine drug testing is not mandated by CA MTUS with general guidelines including use of drug screening with issues of abuse, addiction or poor pain control. ODG recommends use of urine drug screening at initiation of opioid therapy and follow up testing based on risk stratification with recommendation for patients at low risk for addiction/aberrant behavior (based on standard risk stratification tools) to be testing within six months of starting treatment then yearly. Patients at higher risk should be tested at much higher frequency, even as often as once a month. In this case, the pain medication prescribed has been stable, there is no documented plan to change or increase medication and there is no information submitted to indicate a moderate or high risk of addiction or aberrant behavior in the patient. URine drug screens consistent with prescribed medication have been performed 4/8/14, 5/14/14, 6/25/14, 8/11/14 and 9/26/14. There is no medical indication for urine drug screen and the original UR denial is upheld.