

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|------------------------------|------------|
| Case Number: | CM15-0108400 | | |
| Date Assigned: | 06/15/2015 | Date of Injury: | 05/26/2012 |
| Decision Date: | 07/14/2015 | UR Denial Date: | 05/11/2015 |
| Priority: | Standard | Application Received: | 06/05/2015 |

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

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 30 year old female injured worker suffered an industrial injury on 05/26/2012. The diagnoses included lumbar degenerative disc disease with radiculopathy, lumbar spondylosis, lumbar sprain/strain, bilateral sacroiliac joint arthropathy and bilateral knee pain. The diagnostics included lumbar magnetic resonance imaging. The injured worker had been treated with nerve injections, medications, and right knee arthroscopy. On 4/21/2015 the treating provider reported continued severe back pain and pain in her knees. On exam there was gait impairment, tenderness to the lumbar muscles and diminished patellar and Achilles reflexes bilaterally. There was decreased motor strength bilaterally in the lower legs. The straight leg raise was positive. The lumbar range of motion caused pain over the facets and was restricted with spasms present. The treatment plan included cream Flurbiprofen 20%, Lidocaine 5%.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Compound analgesic cream (Flurbiprofen 20%, Lidocaine 5% #180 grams): Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines topical analgesics Page(s): 111-113.

Decision rationale: The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on topical analgesics states: Recommended as an option as indicated below. Largely experimental in use with few randomized controlled trials to determine efficacy or safety. Primarily recommended for neuropathic pain when trials of antidepressants and anticonvulsants have failed. (Namaka, 2004) These agents are applied locally to painful areas with advantages that include lack of systemic side effects, absence of drug interactions, and no need to titrate. (Colombo, 2006) Many agents are compounded as monotherapy or in combination for pain control (including NSAIDs, opioids, capsaicin, local anesthetics, antidepressants, glutamate receptor antagonists, -adrenergic receptor agonist, adenosine, cannabinoids, cholinergic receptor agonists, agonists, prostanoids, bradykinin, adenosine triphosphate, biogenic amines, and nerve growth factor). (Argoff, 2006) 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 recommended. The requested medication contains ingredients, which are not indicated per the California MTUS for topical analgesic use. Therefore the request is not medically necessary.