

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|------------------------------|------------|
| Case Number: | CM15-0125437 | | |
| Date Assigned: | 07/10/2015 | Date of Injury: | 03/21/2014 |
| Decision Date: | 08/05/2015 | UR Denial Date: | 06/22/2015 |
| Priority: | Standard | Application Received: | 06/29/2015 |

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 injured worker is a 47-year-old male who sustained an industrial injury on 3/21/2014 resulting in bilateral pain in the shoulders, elbows, and forearms . He was diagnosed with bilateral shoulder impingement syndrome; bilateral wrist tendonitis; hand paresthesia; and, bilateral epicondylitis/forearm tenosynovitis. Treatment has included chiropractic therapy which he reports as being helpful in relieving pain symptoms; physical therapy; injections (unspecified); medication which he states is helpful in topical form; wrist stabilization; home exercise; and, extracorporeal shockwave treatment. The injured worker continues to report pain in the right shoulder and bilateral upper extremities, grip weakness, and numbness in the right wrist. The treating physician's plan of care includes use of Gabacyclotram: Gabapentin 10%/Cyclobenzaprine 6%/Tramadol 10%. He is working with restrictions.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Gabacyclotram: Gabapentin 10%/Cyclobenzaprine 6%/ Tramadol 10% 180 gm: Upheld

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

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, biogenicamines, 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 (gabapentin, tramadol) which are not indicated per the California MTUS for topical analgesic use. Therefore, the request is not certified.