

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0127232		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	07/13/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	12/19/2010
<b>Decision Date:</b>	08/11/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	06/30/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	07/01/2015

### 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: California

Certification(s)/Specialty: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, Pain Management

### 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 62 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 12/19/2010. She reported being hit by a cart and falling onto hands and knees Diagnoses include disorder of sacrum (ankyloses instability), medial meniscus tear, and closed dislocation of the shoulder. She has a history of ulcerative colitis with a ruptured ulcer requiring surgical repair. Treatments to date were not documented in the medical records submitted for this review. Currently, she complained of low back pain with radiation to lower extremities and left shoulder pain. Current medications included Norco, Ambien, and Soma. On 4/4/15, the physical examination documented decreased lumbar range of motion and decreased sensation. The Kemp's tests, Straight leg raise tests were positive bilaterally. The plan of care included Vicodin 7.5mg, one tablet every four hours #150.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Vicodin 7.5/325mg #150:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 80.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines  
Opioids Page(s): 75-80.

**Decision rationale:** With regard to this request, the California Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines state the following about on-going management with opioids: "Four domains have been proposed as most relevant for ongoing monitoring of chronic pain patients on opioids: pain relief, side effects, physical and psychosocial functioning, and the occurrence of any potentially aberrant (or non-adherent) drug-related behaviors. These domains have been summarized as the '4 A's' (analgesia, activities of daily living, adverse side effects, and aberrant drug-taking behaviors). The monitoring of these outcomes over time should affect therapeutic decisions and provide a framework for documentation of the clinical use of these controlled drugs." Guidelines further recommend discontinuing opioids if there is no documentation of improvement in function and reduction in pain. In the progress reports available for review, the requesting provider did not adequately document monitoring of the four domains. Improvement in function was not clearly outlined. The MTUS defines this as a clinical significant improvement in activities of daily living or a reduction in work restrictions. Based on the lack of documentation, medical necessity of this request cannot be established at this time. Although this opioid is not medically necessary at this time, it should not be abruptly halted, and the requesting provider should start a weaning schedule as he or she sees fit or supply the requisite monitoring documentation to continue this medication.