

Case Number:	CM15-0148610		
Date Assigned:	08/11/2015	Date of Injury:	12/29/2007
Decision Date:	10/02/2015	UR Denial Date:	06/25/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	07/30/2015

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:

This is a 49-year-old male who sustained an industrial injury on 12-29-2007 due to a motor vehicle accident. Diagnoses include status post left shoulder surgery x 2. Treatment to date has included medication, physical therapy, cortisone injections and shoulder surgery x 2. According to the progress notes dated 6-3-2015, the IW (injured worker) reported left shoulder pain. On examination, the lateral left shoulder, left biceps tendon and left acromioclavicular joint was tender. Apley scratch test was painful on the left. Forward flexion was 120 degrees. The treatment plan included continuing current medications and return visit in one month. A request was made for topical compound cream: Diclofenac, Baclofen, Bupivacaine, Gabapentin, Ibuprofen, Pentoxifyline, apply 1-2 gm to affected area, three to four times a day; 120 gms with 3 refills for management of left shoulder pain, as an outpatient.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Topical compound cream: Diclofenac, Baclofen, Bupivacaine, Gabapentin, Ibuprofen, Pentoxifyline quantity: 120gm with 3 refills: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 111-112.

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