MAXIMUS Federal Services

Case Number:	CM15-0171674		
Date Assigned:	09/14/2015	Date of Injury:	01/31/2003
Decision Date:	10/13/2015	UR Denial Date:	08/13/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	08/31/2015

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 41 year old female injured worker suffered an industrial injury on 3-31-2003. The diagnoses included post lumbar laminectomy syndrome, low back pain, fibromyalgia, spasms of the muscle, mood disorder and urinary incontinence. On 8-4-2015, the treating provider reported low backache. She reported her pain had remained unchanged. She reported she cannot sleep at night and would like to increase her pain medication as she had been on the same dose for a long time and medication is not as effective as it once was. The medications she was using were Dilaudid and Morphine controlled release. On exam, the lumbar spine had reduced range of motion that was very limited due to pain and allodynia noted. Prior treatments included lumbosacral fusion, spinal cord stimulator, trigger point injections, physical therapy, acupuncture, TENS unit and several failed medications. The provider noted the injured worker did meet the criteria of the signed pain contract and prescribed medication by only 1 physician. The diagnostics included urine drug screen 5-19-2012 which was inconsistent, however the provider reported the injured worker was nauseated that day and did not take Dilaudid that day. The visit not on 8-4-2015 did not include evidence of functional performance or a pain assessment with pain levels. The Utilization Review on 8-13-2015 determined non-certification/ modification for Dilaudid 4mg #180 with 1 refill.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Dilaudid 4mg #180 with 1 refill: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines, Pain Chapter (web: updated 7/15/15).

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Opioids for chronic pain.

Decision rationale: The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on opioids states for ongoing management: On-Going Management. Actions Should Include: (a) Prescriptions from a single practitioner taken as directed, and all prescriptions from a single pharmacy. (b) The lowest possible dose should be prescribed to improve pain and function. (c) Office: Ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects. Pain assessment should include current pain; the least reported pain over the period since last assessment; average pain; intensity of pain after taking the opioid; how long it takes for pain relief; and how long pain relief lasts. Satisfactory response to treatment may be indicated by the patient's decreased pain, increased level of function, or improved quality of life. Information from family members or other caregivers should be considered in determining the patient's response to treatment. The 4 A's for Ongoing Monitoring: 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 nonadherent) 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. (Passik, 2000) (d) Home: To aid in pain and functioning assessment, the patient should be requested to keep a pain dairy that includes entries such as pain triggers, and incidence of end-of-dose pain. It should be emphasized that using this diary will help in tailoring the opioid dose. This should not be a requirement for pain management. (e) Use of drug screening or inpatient treatment with issues of abuse, addiction, or poor pain control. (f) Documentation of misuse of medications (doctor-shopping, uncontrolled drug escalation, drug diversion). (g) Continuing review of overall situation with regard to nonopioid means of pain control. (h) Consideration of a consultation with a multidisciplinary pain clinic if doses of opioids are required beyond what is usually required for the condition or pain does not improve on opioids in 3 months. Consider a psych consult if there is evidence of depression, anxiety or irritability. Consider an addiction medicine consult if there is evidence of substance misuse. When to Continue Opioids (a) If the patient has returned to work, (b) If the patient has improved functioning and pain. (Washington, 2002) (Colorado, 2002) (Ontario, 2000) (VA/DoD, 2003) (Maddox-AAPM/APS, 1997) (Wisconsin, 2004) (Warfield, 2004) The long-term use of this medication class is not recommended per the California MTUS unless there documented evidence of benefit with measurable outcome measures and improvement in function. There is no documented significant improvement in VAS scores for significant periods of time. There are no objective measurements of improvement in function. Therefore all criteria for the ongoing use of opioids have not been met and the request is not medically necessary.