

Case Number:	CM15-0174289		
Date Assigned:	09/16/2015	Date of Injury:	06/25/2009
Decision Date:	10/23/2015	UR Denial Date:	08/07/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/04/2015

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: Texas, New York, California
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Preventive Medicine, Occupational Medicine

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 applicant is a represented 40-year-old who has filed a claim for neck, shoulder, elbow, and wrist pain reportedly associated with an industrial injury of June 25, 2009. In a Utilization Review report dated August 7, 2015, the claims administrator failed to approve a request for several topical compounded agents. The claims administrator referenced a July 9, 2015 RFA form and an associated progress note of the same date in its determination. The applicant's attorney subsequently appealed. On an order form dated July 9, 2015, the attending provider did endorse several topical compounded agents. In an associated Doctor's First Report (DFR) dated July 9, 2015, the applicant reported multifocal complaints of neck, shoulder, elbow, and wrist pain. X-rays, a TENS unit, a hot and cold unit, physical therapy, acupuncture, extracorporeal shockwave therapy, multiple MRI studies, and the topical compound in question were seemingly endorsed.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Cyclobenzaprine/Flurbiprofen 180gm: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS General Approaches 2004, Section(s): Initial Approaches to Treatment, and Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Topical Analgesics.

Decision rationale: No, the request for a Cyclobenzaprine-Flurbiprofen containing topical compound was not medically necessary, medically appropriate, or indicated here. As noted on page 113 of the MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, muscle relaxants such as cyclobenzaprine, i.e., the primary ingredient in the compound, are not recommended for topical compound formulation purposes. Since one or more ingredients in the compound was not recommended, the entire compound was not recommended, per page 111 of the MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines. The attending provider's July 9, 2015 DFR, moreover, failed to furnish a clear or compelling rationale for what page 111 of the MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines deems "largely experimental" topical compounds such as the agent in question in favor of what the MTUS Guideline in ACOEM Chapter 3, page 47 considers first-line oral pharmaceuticals. Therefore, the request was not medically necessary.

Capsaicin/Flurbiprofen/Gabapentin/Menthol/Camphor: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Topical Analgesics.

Decision rationale: Similarly, the request for a Capsaicin-Flurbiprofen-Gabapentin containing topical compound was likewise not medically necessary, medically appropriate, or indicated here. As noted on page 113 of the MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, gabapentin, i.e., the tertiary ingredient in the compound, is not recommended for topical compound formulation purposes. Since one or more ingredients in the compound was not recommended, the entire compound was not recommended, per page 111 of the MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines. Therefore, the request was not medically necessary.