

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0175463		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	09/16/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	10/27/2014
<b>Decision Date:</b>	10/19/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	08/27/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	09/05/2015

### 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: Emergency 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 injured worker is a 36 year old male who sustained an industrial injury on 10-27-14. A review of the medical records indicates the injured worker is undergoing treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder, major depressive disorder, anxiety, possible complex regional pain syndrome, left hand and elbow pain, and amputations of the 4th and 5th digits of the left hand. Medical records (07-13-15) indicate the injured worker has a lot of pain and dysfunction of this left arm, as well as stiffness in the left elbow, wrist, and hand. He also complains of tingling, numbness, burning, phantom pain, throbbing, and discoloration of his hand. The physical exam (07-13-15) reveals the injured worker has "considerable pain when moving his left hand but at rest does not seem to be in the severe 9/10 pain that he indicates that he has constantly." Mental examination (07-13-15) indicates that the injured worker "easily attends to questions and displays intact sequencing, with intact abstract thinking and intact short and long term recall." Treatment has included 2 surgeries top his left hand, plastic surgery to his left hand, 90 sessions of therapy to the left hand, medications, and psychotherapy sessions. The original utilization review (08-27-15) non-certified 16 post-traumatic stress disorder focused cognitive behavioral therapy sessions, Ativan, and Clonazepam.

## IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

### **Clonazepam 1 mg 1 by mouth 3 times daily #90 Refills: 2: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

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

**Decision rationale:** The requested Clonazepam 1 mg 1 by mouth 3 times daily #90 Refills: 2 is not medically necessary. CA MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines, Benzodiazepines, Page 24, note that benzodiazepines are "Not recommended for long-term use because long-term efficacy is unproven and there is a risk of dependence." The injured worker has pain and dysfunction of this left arm, as well as stiffness in the left elbow, wrist, and hand. He also complains of tingling, numbness, burning, phantom pain, throbbing, and discoloration of his hand. The physical exam (07-13-15) reveals the injured worker has "considerable pain when moving his left hand but at rest does not seem to be in the severe 9/10 pain that he indicates that he has constantly." Mental examination (07-13-15) indicates that the injured worker "easily attends to questions and displays intact sequencing, with intact abstract thinking and intact short and long term recall." Treatment has included 2 surgeries top his left hand, plastic surgery to his left hand, 90 sessions of therapy to the left hand, medications, and psychotherapy sessions. The treating physician has not documented the medical indication for continued use of this benzodiazepine medication, nor objective evidence of derived functional benefit from its previous use. The criteria noted above not having been met, Clonazepam 1 mg 1 by mouth 3 times daily #90 Refills: 2 is not medically necessary.

### **Ativan 1 mg 1 by mouth at bedtime as needed for sleep #30 Refills: 2: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

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

**Decision rationale:** The requested Ativan 1 mg 1 by mouth at bedtime as needed for sleep #30 refills: 2 is not medically necessary. CA MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines, Benzodiazepines, Page 24, note that benzodiazepines are "Not recommended for long-term use because long-term efficacy is unproven and there is a risk of dependence." The injured worker has pain and dysfunction of this left arm, as well as stiffness in the left elbow, wrist, and hand. He also complains of tingling, numbness, burning, phantom pain, throbbing, and discoloration of his hand. The physical exam (07-13-15) reveals the injured worker has "considerable pain when moving his left hand but at rest does not seem to be in the severe 9/10 pain that he indicates that he has constantly." Mental examination (07-13-15) indicates that the injured worker "easily attends to questions and displays intact sequencing, with intact abstract thinking and intact short and long term recall." Treatment has included 2 surgeries top his left hand, plastic surgery to his left hand, 90 sessions of therapy to the left hand, medications, and psychotherapy sessions. The treating physician has not documented the medical indication for continued use of this

benzodiazepine medication, nor objective evidence of derived functional benefit from its previous use. The criteria noted above not having been met, Ativan 1 mg 1 by mouth at bedtime as needed for sleep #30 refills: 2 is not medically necessary.

**PTSD-Focused CBT therapy 16 sessions: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines Mental Illness and Stress chapter.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Psychological treatment. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain Chapter, Psychotherapy, Guidelines.

**Decision rationale:** The requested PTSD-Focused CBT therapy 16 sessions is not medically necessary. Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, Psychological Treatment, Pages 101-102 recommend psych treatment for specifically identified chronic pain patients, and Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Pain Chapter, Psychotherapy Guidelines recommend continued psychotherapy beyond a six visit trial with documented derived functional improvement. The injured worker has pain and dysfunction of this left arm, as well as stiffness in the left elbow, wrist, and hand. He also complains of tingling, numbness, burning, phantom pain, throbbing, and discoloration of his hand. The physical exam (07-13-15) reveals the injured worker has "considerable pain when moving his left hand but at rest does not seem to be in the severe 9/10 pain that he indicates that he has constantly." Mental examination (07-13-15) indicates that the injured worker "easily attends to questions and displays intact sequencing, with intact abstract thinking and intact short and long term recall." Treatment has included 2 surgeries top his left hand, plastic surgery to his left hand, 90 sessions of therapy to the left hand, medications, and psychotherapy sessions. The treating physician has not documented objective evidence of derived functional improvement from completed psychotherapy sessions. The criteria noted above not having been met, PTSD-Focused CBT therapy 16 sessions is not medically necessary.