

Case Number:	CM15-0178302		
Date Assigned:	09/18/2015	Date of Injury:	04/04/2011
Decision Date:	10/22/2015	UR Denial Date:	08/25/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/10/2015

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 injured worker is a 48 year old female, who sustained an industrial-work injury on 4-4-11. A review of the medical records indicates that the injured worker is undergoing treatment for chronic pain syndrome, degeneration of cervical intervertebral disc, brachial neuritis and psychophysiological disorder. Medical records dated (4-28-15 to 6-11-15) indicate that the injured worker complains of increased pain and left-sided neck spasm. She has tried self-management but has been unable to reduce her symptoms. She reports fatigue, lethargy, night sweats, muscle aches, weakness, joint pain, swelling in the extremities, depression, anxiety, and sleep disturbance. The medical records also indicate worsening of the activities of daily living. Per the treating physician report dated 1-7-15 the injured worker can return to work with restrictions. The physical exam dated 4-28-15 reveals that the deep tendon reflexes to the upper extremities are 2+ and Hoffman's reflex not present. The medical record dated 6-11-15 did not have any physical exam findings noted. There is no urine drug screen reports noted. Treatment to date has included pain medication, cervical fusion, Tramadol since at least 2014, Melatonin since at least 6-11-15 and Trazadone since at least 6-11-15, Functional Restoration Program, home exercise program (HEP) and other modalities. The request for authorization date was 8-20-15 and requested services included Melatonin 5mg #60 with 2 refills, Tramadol 50mg #90 with 2 refills and Trazodone 50mg #30 with 2 refills. The original Utilization review dated 8-25-15 non-certified the request for Melatonin 5mg #60 with 2 refills as guidelines state that the literature reporting treatment of chronic insomnia disorder with Melatonin remains inconclusive, there is no sleep history documented and therefore the medical necessity is not established. The

request for Tramadol 50mg #90 with 2 refills is non certified as the compliance with the medication guidelines has not been established and there are no documented objective findings of functional improvement with use. The request for Trazodone 50mg #30 with 2 refills is non-certified as there is no documentation of objective functional benefit from use of the medication.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Melatonin 5mg #60 with 2 refills: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Pain Chapter, Melatonin.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) insomnia.

Decision rationale: The California MTUS and the ACOEM do not specifically address this medication. Per the official disability guidelines recommend pharmacological agents for insomnia only is used after careful evaluation of potential causes of sleep disturbance. Primary insomnia is usually addressed pharmacologically. Secondary insomnia may be treated with pharmacological and/or psychological measures. Pharmacological treatment consists of four main categories: Benzodiazepines, Non-benzodiazepines, Melatonin and melatonin receptor agonists and over the counter medications. Sedating antidepressants have also been used to treat insomnia however there is less evidence to support their use for insomnia, but they may be an option in patients with co-existing depression. The patient does not have the diagnosis of primary insomnia or depression. There is also no documentation of first line insomnia treatment options such as sleep hygiene measures. Therefore the request is not medically necessary.

Tramadol 50mg #90 with 2 refills: 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): 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 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. (Passik, 2000) (d) Home: To aid in pain and functioning assessment, the patient should be requested to keep a pain diary 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 non-opioid 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 decrease in objective pain measures such as VAS scores for significant periods of time. There are no objective measures of improvement of function or how the medication improves activities. The work status is not mentioned. Therefore all criteria for the ongoing use of opioids have not been met and the request is not medically necessary.

Trazodone 50mg #30 with 2 refills: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) insomnia.

Decision rationale: The California MTUS and the ACOEM do not specifically address this medication. Per the official disability guidelines recommend pharmacological agents for insomnia only is used after careful evaluation of potential causes of sleep disturbance. Primary insomnia is usually addressed pharmacologically. Secondary insomnia may be treated with pharmacological and/or psychological measures. Pharmacological treatment consists of four main categories: Benzodiazepines, Non-benzodiazepines, Melatonin and melatonin receptor agonists and over the counter medications. Sedating antidepressants have also been used to treat insomnia however there is less evidence to support their use for insomnia, but they may be an option in patients with coexisting depression. The patient does not have the diagnosis of primary insomnia or depression. There is also no documentation of first line insomnia treatment options such as sleep hygiene measures. Therefore the request is not medically necessary.