

Case Number:	CM15-0066067		
Date Assigned:	04/13/2015	Date of Injury:	07/31/2001
Decision Date:	05/15/2015	UR Denial Date:	03/17/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	04/07/2015

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, California
 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 52-year-old female patient who sustained an industrial injury on 7/31/01. The diagnoses have included cervicalgia, myofascial pain, thoracic outlet syndrome, rule out left cervical facet pain, repetitive stress left upper extremity. Per the physician progress note dated 3/5/15, she had complains of neck and bilateral shoulder pain at 6/10. She had complains of left sided neck pain and headaches with burning in the left neck and shoulder. Physical exam revealed cervical tenderness, tenderness of the left cervical facet joints, pain with decreased range of motion, and tender trigger points in the left parascapular region. The medications list includes Voltaren gel, Hydrocodone, Opana and Zolpidem. She has had Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) of the cervical spine. Treatment to date has included medications, cervical medial branch neurotomy, physical therapy with minimal benefit, cervical radiofrequency treatments with 11 months of pain relief, home exercise program (HEP), and activity modifications.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

1 prescription of Opana ER 20mg #60: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Oxymorphone.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines CRITERIA FOR USE OF OPIOIDS Page(s): 76-80.

Decision rationale: Request: 1 prescription of Opana ER 20mg #60 Opana contains oxymorphone which is an opioid analgesic. According to the cited guidelines, "A therapeutic trial of opioids should not be employed until the patient has failed a trial of non-opioid analgesics. Before initiating therapy, the patient should set goals, and the continued use of opioids should be contingent on meeting these goals." The records provided do not specify that that patient has set goals regarding the use of opioid analgesic. The treatment failure with non-opioid analgesics is not specified in the records provided. Other criteria for ongoing management of opioids are: "The lowest possible dose should be prescribed to improve pain and function. Continuing review of overall situation with regard to non-opioid means of pain control. Ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects...Consider the use of a urine drug screen to assess for the use or the presence of illegal drugs." The records provided do not provide a documentation of response in regards to pain control and objective functional improvement to opioid analgesic for this patient. The continued review of the overall situation with regard to non-opioid means of pain control is not documented in the records provided. As recommended by the cited guidelines a documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects should be maintained for ongoing management of opioid analgesic, these are not specified in the records provided. Response to antidepressant, anticonvulsant or lower potency opioid for chronic pain is not specified in the records provided. A recent urine drug screen report is not specified in the records provided. This patient does not meet criteria for ongoing continued use of opioids analgesic. The medical necessity of 1 prescription of Opana ER 20mg #60 is not established for this patient.

1 prescription of Norco 10/325mg #60: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids, criteria for use; Opioids for chronic pain.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines CRITERIA FOR USE OF OPIOIDS Page(s): 76-80.

Decision rationale: Request: 1 prescription of Norco 10/325mg #60 Norco contains hydrocodone and acetaminophen. Hydrocodone is an opioid analgesic. According to the cited guidelines, "A therapeutic trial of opioids should not be employed until the patient has failed a trial of non-opioid analgesics. Before initiating therapy, the patient should set goals, and the continued use of opioids should be contingent on meeting these goals." The records provided do not specify that that patient has set goals regarding the use of opioid analgesic. The treatment failure with non-opioid analgesics is not specified in the records provided. Other criteria for ongoing management of opioids are: "The lowest possible dose should be prescribed to improve pain and function. Continuing review of overall situation with regard to non-opioid means of pain control. Ongoing review and documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects...Consider the use of a urine drug screen to assess for the use or the presence of illegal drugs." The records provided do not provide a documentation of response in regards to pain control and objective functional improvement to opioid analgesic for this patient. The continued review of the overall situation with regard to

non-opioid means of pain control is not documented in the records provided. As recommended by the cited guidelines a documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects should be maintained for ongoing management of opioid analgesic, these are not specified in the records provided. Response to antidepressant, anticonvulsant or lower potency opioid for chronic pain is not specified in the records provided. A recent urine drug screen report is not specified in the records provided. This patient does not meet criteria for ongoing continued use of opioids analgesic. The medical necessity of 1 prescription of Norco 10/325mg #60 is not established for this patient.