

Case Number:	CM15-0073928		
Date Assigned:	04/24/2015	Date of Injury:	08/05/2000
Decision Date:	06/11/2015	UR Denial Date:	04/01/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	04/17/2015

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: Indiana

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 injured worker is a 51 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on 8/5/2000. The mechanism of injury is unclear. The injured worker was diagnosed as having status post left total knee replacement, bilateral internal knee derangement, right total knee replacement, bilateral knee degenerative joint disease, bilateral knee pain, and right knee cyclop scar tissue. Treatment to date has included medications, physical therapy, and surgery. The request is for Hydromorphone (Dilaudid) 4mg #120. A primary treating physician's progress report dated 3/25/2015 indicates he complained of bilateral knee pain. Pain is exacerbated by prolonged activity. His current medications are: Exalgo, Celebrex, Percocet, Valium, Soma, Wellbutrin and Dilaudid. The records indicate Dilaudid provides 50% decrease of breakthrough pain. The treatment plan included: continuing physical therapy, Exalgo, Dilaudid, and follow up.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Hydromorphone (Dilaudid) 4 mg #120: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 74-96. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain (Chronic), Diclofenac.

Decision rationale: Per MTUS, Dilaudid is the brand name version of Hydromorphone, which is a pure agonist/short acting opioid and they are often used for intermittent or breakthrough pain. ODG does not recommend the use of opioids for low back pain except for short use for severe cases, not to exceed 2 weeks. The patient has exceeded the 2 week recommended treatment length for opioid usage. MTUS does not discourage use of opioids past 2 weeks, but does state that 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. The treating physician does not document any of the following: the least reported pain over the period since last assessment, intensity of pain after taking opioid, pain relief. The quantity requested in excess of the recommendations. Therefore, the request is not medically necessary.