

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0076248		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	04/27/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	06/12/2013
<b>Decision Date:</b>	06/11/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	04/10/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	04/21/2015

### 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 53-year-old male who sustained an industrial injury on 6/12/13. The diagnoses have included bilateral shoulder tendinitis, chronic pain, and depression/anxiety, lumbosacral sprain with radicular symptoms, lumbar stenosis, and bilateral knee arthritis. Treatment to date has included medications, diagnostics, and physical therapy. The diagnostic testing that was performed included Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) of the lumbar spine, x-rays of bilateral knees and electromyography (EMG) /nerve conduction velocity studies (NCV) bilateral upper and lower extremities. The current medications included Norco and Prilosec. Currently, as per the physician progress note dated 4/3/15, the injured worker complains of ongoing low back pain with radiation to the bilateral lower extremities. He also reports bilateral knee pain and weakness and bilateral shoulder pain. The objective findings revealed decreased range of motion in bilateral knees, positive patellar crepitus and joint line tenderness bilaterally, McMurray's was painful, and the injured worker ambulated with use of a cane. Per physician progress note dated 3/3/15, the injured worker's physical exam of the thoracolumbar spine revealed tenderness, decreased range of motion and positive Lasegue test on the left. The physician noted that lumbar epidural steroid injection (ESI) was denied. The physician requested treatment included Norco 10/325mg #60.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Norco 10/325mg #60:** Upheld

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

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids, On-Going Management, Pages 78-80, Opioids for Chronic Pain, Pages 80-82.

**Decision rationale:** The requested Norco 10/325mg #60 is not medically necessary. CA MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines, Opioids, On-Going Management, Pages 78-80, Opioids for Chronic Pain, Pages 80-82, recommend continued use of this opiate for the treatment of moderate to severe pain, with documented objective evidence of derived functional benefit, as well as documented opiate surveillance measures. The injured worker has ongoing low back pain with radiation to the bilateral lower extremities. He also reports bilateral knee pain and weakness and bilateral shoulder pain. The objective findings revealed decreased range of motion in bilateral knees, positive patellar crepitus and joint line tenderness bilaterally, McMurray's was painful, and the injured worker ambulated with use of a cane. The treating physician has not documented VAS pain quantification with and without medications, duration of treatment, objective evidence of derived functional benefit such as improvements in activities of daily living or reduced work restrictions or decreased reliance on medical intervention, nor measures of opiate surveillance including an executed narcotic pain contract or urine drug screening. The criteria noted above not having been met, Norco 10/325mg #60 is not medically necessary.