

Wren Systems

An Independent Review Organization
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NOTICE OF INDEPENDENT REVIEW DECISION

DATE OF REVIEW:

Jan/18/2011

IRO CASE #:

DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICE OR SERVICES IN DISPUTE:

Medications hydrocodone 10/325 one 4x daily #120; Zoloft 50mg once a day #30; Elavil 25mg one at bedtime #30 with 3 refills

DESCRIPTION OF THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR EACH PHYSICIAN OR OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDER WHO REVIEWED THE DECISION:

MD, Board Certified in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
Board Certified in Pain Management
Board Certified in Electrodiagnostic Medicine

REVIEW OUTCOME:

Upon independent review, the reviewer finds that the previous adverse determination/adverse determinations should be:

- Upheld (Agree)
 Overturned (Disagree)
 Partially Overturned (Agree in part/Disagree in part)

INFORMATION PROVIDED TO THE IRO FOR REVIEW

Official Disability Guidelines and Treatment Guidelines
12/3/10, 12/13/10
M.D. 6/18/10-12/10/10
Spine 8/10/10
Council 9/24/10, 5/23/07
Review Med, 2/12/10
M.D. 12/3/10
M.D. 12/13/10

PATIENT CLINICAL HISTORY SUMMARY

This is a woman injured in xx/xx. She developed chronic low back pain with left lower

extremity sciatica. She has been under treatment. She continues to work 70+ hours per week and takes hydrocodone. She has depression and sleep issues and is on Zoloft and amitryptiline. Her prescriptions drugs include hydrocodone 10/325 one 4x daily #120; Zoloft 50mg once a day #30; Elavil 25mg one at bedtime #30 with three refills, were denied due to lack of functional improvement.

ANALYSIS AND EXPLANATION OF THE DECISION INCLUDING CLINICAL BASIS, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS USED TO SUPPORT THE DECISION

The role of medications for chronic pain have been debated for several years. The ODG permits the use of Elavil for depression and neuropathic pain. ODG also permits the use of Zoloft. ODG states that if the patient's pain is in remission, then the antidepressants should be weaned. The clinical notes in this case indicate that this patient continues to have pain. Dr. has described in the notes how the prescribed medications are helping the patient's sleep and depression due to the chronic pain. The use of Hydrocodone, as an opioid, has also been debated with the pendulum now swinging against the chronic use of this drug. This patient, however, has been able to continue to work and even puts in overtime. One reviewer said since there is no functional improvement, the opiate should not be continued. The ODG lists pros and cons for the use of opiates for chronic pain and how they are to be used. The fact that this woman is working and shows no evidence of abuse or diversion are signs of appropriate use per the ODG. While the ideal situation is to stop any medication, there was nothing in the records provided to suggest there is not a medical necessity at this time for this patient for these medications. Upon independent review, the reviewer finds that the previous adverse determination/adverse determinations should be overturned. The reviewer finds that there is medical necessity for Medications hydrocodone 10/325 one 4x daily #120; Zoloft 50mg once a day #30; Elavil 25mg one at bedtime #30 with 3 refills.

A DESCRIPTION AND THE SOURCE OF THE SCREENING CRITERIA OR OTHER CLINICAL BASIS USED TO MAKE THE DECISION

- ACOEM-AMERICA COLLEGE OF OCCUPATIONAL & ENVIRONMENTAL MEDICINE UM KNOWLEDGBASE
- AHCPR-AGENCY FOR HEALTHCARE RESEARCH & QUALITY GUIDELINES
- DWC-DIVISION OF WORKERS COMPENSATION POLICIES OR GUIDELINES
- EUROPEAN GUIDELINES FOR MANAGEMENT OF CHRONIC LOW BACK PAIN
- INTERQUAL CRITERIA
- MEDICAL JUDGEMENT, CLINICAL EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ACCEPTED MEDICAL STANDARDS
- MERCY CENTER CONSENSUS CONFERENCE GUIDELINES
- MILLIMAN CARE GUIDELINES
- ODG-OFFICIAL DISABILITY GUIDELINES & TREATMENT GUIDELINES
- PRESSLEY REED, THE MEDICAL DISABILITY ADVISOR
- TEXAS GUIDELINES FOR CHIROPRACTIC QUALITY ASSURANCE & PRACTICE PARAMETERS
- TEXAS TACADA GUIDELINES
- TMF SCREENING CRITERIA MANUAL
- PEER REVIEWED NATIONALLY ACCEPTED MEDICAL LITERATURE (PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION)

OTHER EVIDENCE BASED, SCIENTIFICALLY VALID, OUTCOME FOCUSED GUIDELINES
(PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION)