

Case Number:	CM13-0030937		
Date Assigned:	12/04/2013	Date of Injury:	10/09/2010
Decision Date:	01/17/2014	UR Denial Date:	09/03/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/02/2013

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. The Expert reviewer is licensed in Acupuncture and is licensed to practice in California. 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/services. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

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 34 year old male patient with complains of lower back pain. As the patient continued symptomatic regardless of previous treatments (surgery, steroids, LESI, oral medication, physical therapy, HEP and modified duties, amongst others) an acupuncture trial of 8 sessions was requested on 08-13-13. The request was modified (09-03-13) by the UR reviewer: six sessions were approved, 2 sessions were denied. The reviewer stated that based on the MTUS additional acupuncture medical necessity will be based on the functional gains obtained with the trial.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Acupuncture trial (8 sessions): Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines.

Decision rationale: Based on the records reviewed, it does not appear that the patient has yet undergone an acupuncture trial. As the patient continued being symptomatic regardless of previous treatments (surgery, steroids, LESI, oral medication, physical therapy, HEP and modified duties, amongst others) an acupuncture trial for pain management is reasonable and

supported by the MTUS. The current mandated guidelines note that the amount of care to produce functional improvement is 3-6 treatments, therefore the care approved by the UR reviewer is in sync with current guidelines (MTUS). The requested eight sessions are in excess of guideline recommendations.