MAXIMUS Federal Services

Case Number:	CM13-0032527		
Date Assigned:	12/11/2013	Date of Injury:	07/25/2005
Decision Date:	01/15/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/07/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/23/2013

HOW THE IMR FINAL DETERMINATION WAS MADE

MAXIMUS Federal Services sent the complete case file to a physician reviewer. He/she has no affiliation with the employer, employee, providers or the claims administrator. The physician reviewer is Board Certified in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation 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 physician 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.

CLINICAL CASE SUMMARY

The expert reviewer developed the following clinical case summary based on a review of the case file, including all medical records:

significant psychological symptoms. Patient had facet neurotomy on 7/11/13 with reduction of neck pain and headaches. As of 9/4/13, patient was taking Nucynta, Benazepril, Skelexin, and trazadone. Physical exam showed paraspinals tenderness, restrictive ROM, Neuro exam was normal. Diagnosis: Cervical disc protrustion C3-C7, Cervicogenic headaches, Cervical strain, Cervical facet pain. Patient was approved for acupuncture previously but he never attended. The request is for an extension of previously approved acupunctures.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Acupuncture, 1 or more needles; without electrical stimulation, initial 15 minutes of personal one-on-one contact with the patient: Overturned

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines.

Decision rationale: Given the fact that the patient has improved with facet neurotomy and he is decreasing in his pain medication intake, it would be reasonable for him to try an initial 6 sessions of acupuncture to reduce symptoms further. His exam showed signs of myofascial pain which is supported by the guidelines for acupuncture.