

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM13-0052897		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	01/15/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	09/21/2005
<b>Decision Date:</b>	06/19/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	11/01/2013
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	11/18/2013

### 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 Board Certified in Occupational Medicine 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 patient has reported low back pain after an injury on 09/21/05. She has been diagnosed with sacroiliitis, sciatica, radiculitis, and lumbar sprain/strain. The QME in 2007 and 2009 did not diagnose any sacroiliac, piriformis, or hip condition or recommend treatment for these areas. The primary treating physician also did not diagnose any hip, sacroiliac, or piriformis condition as he treated her over the years. During 2013 the injured worker has been seeing a pain management physician who has proposed various causes for the low back pain, including sacroiliac dysfunction. On 5/23/13 he recommended a sacroiliac injection. That injection was apparently not authorized due to a dispute about the accepted body part. On 10/24/13, the pain management physician noted ongoing low back and right leg pain. Pain and tenderness were present around the right low back and hip. He recommended three injections; hip bursa, sacroiliac, and piriformis.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

#### **THE REQUEST FOR 1 RIGHT SACROILIAC JOINT INJECTION IS NOT MEDICALLY NECESSARY AND APPROPRIATE:**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Non-MTUS Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Hip and Pelvis Chapter, Sacroiliac joint blocks, Piriformis injections and Sacroiliac Joint Injections, updated ACOEM Guidelines, Low Back, 4/7/08, Page 191

**Decision rationale:** The treating physician has proposed three different kinds of injections at the same time. Injections of these kinds are diagnostic as well as therapeutic, and it is not possible to determine the result of any one of the injections if another injection is performed at the same time. The MTUS does not provide direction for sacroiliac injections. The updated ACOEM Guidelines cited above recommend against sacroiliac injections unless there is a clearly defined inflammatory condition. In this case there is non-specific pain only, with no clearly defined inflammatory condition (such as a rheumatological disease). The Official Disability Guidelines recommend sacroiliac injections only after a specific course of physical therapy for sacroiliac pain, failure of medications, and sufficient clinical findings. There is no evidence in this case that this injured worker has failed a sufficient course of specific physical therapy. In addition the treating physician has recommended different kinds of injections to be performed simultaneously. The sacroiliac injection is not medically necessary and appropriate based on guideline criteria and the plan to perform multiple injections at the same time.