

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0102567		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	09/16/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	04/28/2012
<b>Decision Date:</b>	10/15/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	06/04/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	07/02/2014

### 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 Neurology, has a subspecialty in Neuromuscular Medicine and is licensed to practice in New Jersey. 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:

The patient is a 63 year old man who sustained a work related injury on April 28 2012. Subsequently, he developed chronic back pain, right sciatic neuropathy and right radiculopathy. The patient had an MRI of the lumbar spine performed on July 30 2013 and demonstrated degenerative disc disease and central canal stenosis. According to a note dated on April 24, 2014, patient continued to have chronic back pain with his activities of daily living. He was also complaining of numbness radiating to the right lower extremity. His physical examination demonstrated sensory deficit on the lateral aspect of the caudal other aspect of the thigh on the right side. The provider requested authorization for epidural steroid injection at L2-S1.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

#### **Epidural Steroid Injection L2-S1: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Epidural Steroid Injections.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints Page(s): 309.

**Decision rationale:** According to MTUS guidelines, epidural steroid injection is optional for radicular pain to avoid surgery. It may offer short term benefit; however there is no significant

long term benefit or reduction for the need of surgery. Furthermore, the patient file does not document that the patient is candidate for surgery. In addition, there is no recent clinical and objective documentation of radiculopathy. MTUS guidelines, does not recommend epidural injections for back pain without radiculopathy (309). Therefore, lumbar epidural steroid injection is not medically necessary.