MAXIMUS Federal Services

Case Number:	CM14-0105498		
Date Assigned:	09/16/2014	Date of Injury:	05/22/2012
Decision Date:	10/21/2014	UR Denial Date:	06/13/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	07/08/2014

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 Licensed in Acupuncture and is licensed to practice in Florida. 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 44-year-old female who sustained an industrial injury to her right wrist on 5/22/12. It appears that the patient also had an injury on 10/19/11. The patient's current diagnoses are: right thumb STT arthritis-status post arthrop lasty, and right wrist radiocarpal synovitis-post op arthoscopy and synovectomy. The records indicate that the patient has had right wrist surgery x3. She has been prescribed the following medications: Cyclobenzaprine, Omeprozole, Terocin, Meloxicam and Dilaudid. She also has received a cortisone injection into the STT joint, with near complete relief. The records show that the patient was prescribed 12 PT sessions and TENS. The documentation provided suggests the patient has had previous acupuncture treatments, however, details regarding these treatments, including time frame courses, and objective signs of improvement were not provided. After reviewing the documentation provided, the records fail to demonstrate any clinical evidence of functional improvement with the prior course of acupuncture treatment provided. The medical necessity for the requested acupuncture sessions has not been established.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Acupuncture 1-2 times a week times 6 weeks (6 sessions of Acupuncture): Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines.

Decision rationale: The patient is a 44-year-old female who sustained an industrial injury to her right wrist on 5/22/12. She is a police sergeant, and as she was apprehending a suspect, the suspect rolled over onto her wrist, causing re-injury to the area (the patient injured her wrist in 2011). She has had right wrist surgery x3, and a cortisone injection. She has also been prescribed medications, PT and TENS. The documentation suggests that the patient has had previous acupuncture treatments. As per CA MTUS Acupuncture Medical Treatment Guidelines (9792.24.1) Acupuncture is used as an option when pain medication is reduced or not tolerated, it may be used as an adjunct to physical rehabilitation and/or surgical intervention to expedite functional recovery. Acupuncture treatments may be extended if functional improvement is documented as defined in Section 9792.20 CA MTUS Acupuncture Guidelines requires clinical evidence of functional improvement for additional care to be considered. CA Acupuncture guidelines sited, 9792.24.1 states that the time to produce significant improvement is 3-6 treatments. It also states that acupuncture may be extended if functional improvement is documented including significant improvement in activities of daily living, reduction of work restriction, and reduction of dependency on continued medical treatment. The current documentation does not provide information that the patient received any benefit from the previous acupuncture sessions, and the objective findings from the provider are unknown. Therefore, the request for Acupuncture treatment is not medically necessary.