

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0011236		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	02/21/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	08/29/2012
<b>Decision Date:</b>	06/25/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	12/31/2013
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	01/28/2014

### 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 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 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:

According to the records made available for review, this is a 46-year-old male with a August 29, 2012 date of injury. At the time of request for authorization for acupuncture 2x6 for headaches (December 31, 2013), there is documentation of subjective (decreased neck pain secondary to physical therapy, range of motion of right shoulder improved, states headache is worse) and objective (decreased range of motion right elbow, increased range of motion right shoulder) findings, current diagnoses (thoracic or lumbosacral neuritis or radiculitis, lumbago, low back pain, low back syndrome, lumbalgia and enthesopathy of hip region, bursitis of hip, gluteal tendinitis, iliac crest spur, psoas tendinitis), and treatment to date (medications and activity modification). In addition, the October 31, 2013 RFA identifies a request for acupuncture 2x6 for headaches.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

#### **ACUPUNCTURE 2 X 6 FOR HEADACHES: Upheld**

**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 MTUS: ACUPUNCTURE MEDICAL TREATMENT GUIDELINES, ,

**Decision rationale:** The Acupuncture Medical Treatment Guidelines identifies that acupuncture may be 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 hasten functional recovery, to reduce pain, reduce inflammation, increase blood flow, increase range of motion, decrease the side effect of medication-induced nausea, promote relaxation in an anxious patient, and reduce muscle spasm. In addition, the Acupuncture Medical Treatment Guidelines allow the use of acupuncture for musculoskeletal conditions for a frequency and duration of treatment as follows: Time to produce functional improvement of three to six treatments, frequency of one to three times per week, and duration of one to two months. Within the medical information available for review, there is documentation of diagnoses of thoracic or lumbosacral neuritis or radiculitis, lumbago, low back pain, low back syndrome, lumbalgia and enthesopathy of hip region, bursitis of hip, gluteal tendinitis, iliac crest spur, psoas tendinitis. In addition, there is documentation of worsening headaches and a request for acupuncture for headaches. However, given that the request is for acupuncture, twice weekly for six weeks, the proposed number of visits exceeds acupuncture guidelines (for an initial trial). The request for acupuncture twice weekly for six weeks for headaches is not medically necessary or appropriate.