

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0150767		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	09/24/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	10/03/2010
<b>Decision Date:</b>	11/25/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	08/22/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	09/16/2014

### 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 a licensed Chiropractor & Acupuncturist, 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:

Claimant is a 49 year old female who sustained a work related injury on 10/3/2010. Her diagnosis ankle sprain, chronic left ankle/foot pain, and status post-surgery for ankle surgery. Prior treatment includes acupuncture, surgery oral medication, physical therapy, and TENS. She had 8 sessions of acupuncture in 2013 and 6 more sessions in early 2014. Per a PR-2 dated 3/4/14, the claimant had significant resolution of pain and symptoms with her last acupuncture in November 2013. It allowed her to continue working full time and exercising on a consistent basis. She was able to exercise longer periods of time and able to work with decreased overall pain and discomfort at work. Per a PR-2 dated 8/6/2014, the claimant reports that with acupuncture she no longer limps and does not take many medications. She feels that without acupuncture her RSD of the foot is coming back.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Acupuncture:** Upheld

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

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines.

**Decision rationale:** According to evidenced based guidelines, further acupuncture after an initial trial is medically necessary based on functional improvement. Functional improvement is defined as a clinically significant improvement in activities of daily living, a reduction in work restrictions, or a reduction of dependency on continued medical treatments or medications. The claimant has had prior acupuncture with subjective benefits. Although the provider documents that there was a decrease of medication, there is no specification of how much less. The claimant also reports that she no longer limp, but there is no documentation of increased activities of daily living. However, the provider fails to document objective functional improvement associated with acupuncture treatment. Therefore further Acupuncture is not medically necessary.