

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0157456		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	09/30/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	08/11/2011
<b>Decision Date:</b>	12/02/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	09/17/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	09/25/2014

### 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 reviewed 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 30-year-old male who sustained an industrial injury on 8/11/11. The patient is a Computer Graphic designer and his injuries began as a result of repetitive motion while working installing large format graphics. His previous diagnosis was Displacement of Cervical Intervertebral Disc. The patient has received acupuncture, chiropractic care, bilateral facet injections and PT. Patient stated that the acupuncture treatment gave him the most relief from his symptoms. The patient still complains of occasional right sided neck pain with activity, despite time, medication and therapy. The documentation supports a modified request for 6 acupuncture treatments instead of the requested 15. The request is modified to support 6 sessions for the cervical spine. The current documentation provides information that the patient could receive benefit from 6 acupuncture sessions and the remaining requested 9 treatments be re-visited at a later date.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**15 Acupuncture Sessions between 9/11/2014 and 11/10/2014:** Overturned

**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:** The patient is a 30-year-old male who sustained an industrial injury on 8/11/11. The patient is a Computer Graphic Designer and his injuries began as a result of repetitive motion while working installing large format graphics. The patient suffers from occasional right-sided neck pain with activity. The patient has received, acupuncture, chiropractic care, PT, and facet injections. Patient stated that the acupuncture treatment gave him the most relief from his symptoms. 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 cited, 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 documentation supports the request for 15 acupuncture treatments. Therefore, the requested 15 acupuncture treatments would be medically necessary for this patient.