

Case Number:	CM14-0170635		
Date Assigned:	10/23/2014	Date of Injury:	01/29/2014
Decision Date:	12/12/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/08/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/15/2014

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 Chiropractic & Acupuncture 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:

The claimant is a 58 year old female who sustained a work related injury on 1/29/14. Per a PR-2 dated 9/26/2014, the claimant has mild improvement in pain in her right elbow over the last three months. She still has pain with forceful gripping, repetitive gripping, and lifting. Her diagnoses are right elbow contusion and right elbow epicondylitis. The claimant has six approved acupuncture visits which she has not attended. The provider is requesting six additional acupuncture visits to make the trial a total of 12 visits. She is working with restrictions.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Six (6) Additional Acupuncture visits 2x per week for 3 weeks for the right arm and right elbow: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines.

Decision rationale: According to the MTUS 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 a prior acupuncture trial authorized. However, the provider fails to document objective functional improvement associated with the completion of the certified acupuncture trial. If this is a request for an initial trial, 12 total visits, including the trial of six already authorized, it exceeds the recommended guidelines for an initial trial. Therefore, the request is not medically necessary.