

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0035495		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	04/25/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	05/16/2013
<b>Decision Date:</b>	05/27/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	01/16/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	01/30/2014

### 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 Chiropractic and 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 injured worker is a 45 year old female who reported low back pain from injury sustained on 05/16/13. Mechanism of injury is unknown. There were no diagnostic imaging reports. Patient was diagnosed with lumbar spine sprain/ strain and post concussion headaches. Patient has been treated with medication. Per notes dated 12/17/13, patient complaints of lumbar spine burning, sharp, pinching, numbness and aching pain radiating to the right foot. Patient has tenderness to palpation of the lumbar spine. Range of motion is within normal limits with pain. Primary treating physician is requesting 8 initial acupuncture sessions of which 6 have been approved by the utilization reviewer. No other medical records were provided for the review.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**ACUPUNCTURE TWO (2) TIMES A WEEK FOR FOUR (4) WEEKS FOR LUMBAR SPINE:** Upheld

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

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

**Decision rationale:** Per MTUS- Acupuncture Medical treatment Guidelines page 8-9. "Acupuncture is used as an option when pain medication is reduced and not tolerated, it may be

used as an adjunct to physical rehabilitation and/or surgical intervention to hasten functional recovery". "Time to produce function improvement: 3-6 treatments. 2) Frequency: 1-3 times per week. 3) Optimum duration: 1-2 months. Acupuncture treatments may be extended if functional improvement is documented". Patient hasn't had prior Acupuncture treatment. Per guidelines 3-6 treatments are sufficient for initial course of Acupuncture. Additional visits may be rendered if the patient has documented objective functional improvement. MTUS- Definition 9792.20 (f) "Functional improvement means either a clinically significant improvement in activities of daily living or a reduction in work restrictions as measured during the history and physical exam. Per guidelines and review of evidence, two (2) times a week for four (4) weeks acupuncture visits are not medically necessary.