

Case Number:	CM14-0043172		
Date Assigned:	05/12/2014	Date of Injury:	05/19/2010
Decision Date:	07/10/2014	UR Denial Date:	02/19/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	02/24/2014

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 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:

This is a 49 y/o male patient with pain complains of neck and lower back. Diagnoses included sprain and strain of the neck, lumbago. Previous treatments included: oral medication, physical therapy, acupuncture (six sessions were previously rendered with unreported benefits), and work modifications amongst others. As the patient continued symptomatic, a request for additional acupuncture x6 (PTP request, dated 02-03-14), another requested for acupuncture x12 was made on 02-04-14 by West Start (possible acupuncture provider).

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

ADDITIONAL ACUPUNCTURE THERAPY 2 X WEEK FOR 6 WEEKS: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines.

Decision rationale: Current guidelines read extension of acupuncture care could be supported for medical necessity "if functional improvement is documented as either a clinically significant improvement in activities of daily living or a reduction in work restrictions and a reduction in the dependency on continued medical treatment." Although six acupuncture sessions were previously authorized, neither the number of sessions rendered nor evidence of sustained,

significant, objective functional improvement (quantifiable response to treatment) with those sessions was documented in order to support the reasonableness and necessity of the additional acupuncture requested. Therefore, the additional acupuncture requested is not supported for medical necessity by the guidelines.