

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0088350		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	07/23/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	12/14/2012
<b>Decision Date:</b>	09/22/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	06/03/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	06/12/2014

### 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 Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, has a subspecialty in Pain Management 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 patient with a date of injury of 12/14/2012. Utilization review determination dated 6/3/2014 recommended non certification of the requested neuromuscular stimulator for shock stating there are no standardized protocols for the use of interferential therapy and that the therapy may vary according to the frequency of stimulation, the pulse duration, treatment time and electrode placement technique. Progress report dated 5/9/2014 identifies the patient had complaints of persistent pain to the upper extremities as well as pain to the thoracic and lumbar paraspinus muscles and bilateral shoulders. Objective findings and assessment were illegible; treatment plan was difficult to decipher but recommended an Inferential (IF) unit and X-force stimulator. A first report dated 4/14/2014 identified the patient to have pain with palpation to the lumbar paraspinus muscles and diminished range of motion. Medication x-rays and physical therapy appeared to have been ordered at this visit.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Inferential Stimulator Purchase for Lumbar and Cervical Spine:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Inferential Current Stimulator.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 114-117 and 122.

**Decision rationale:** Regarding the request for interferential unit, CA MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines state that interferential current stimulation is not recommended as an isolated intervention. They go on to state that patient selection criteria if interferential stimulation is to be used anyways include pain is ineffectively controlled due to diminished effectiveness of medication, side effects or history of substance abuse, significant pain from postoperative conditions limits the ability to perform exercises, or unresponsive to conservative treatment. If those criteria are met, then in one month trial may be appropriate to study the effects and benefits. With identification of objective functional improvement, additional interferential unit use may be supported. Within the documentation available for review, there is no indication that the patient has met the selection criteria for interferential stimulation (pain is ineffectively controlled due to diminished effectiveness of medication, side effects or history of substance abuse, significant pain from postoperative conditions limits the ability to perform exercises, or unresponsive to conservative treatment.). Although documentation states x-rays, medication and physical therapy had been ordered there is no follow up documentation reporting any outcome with these measures. Additionally, there is no documentation that the patient has undergone an interferential unit trial with objective functional improvement and there is no provision for modification of the current request. In light of the above issues, the currently requested interferential unit is not medically necessary.