

Case Number:	CM14-0127172		
Date Assigned:	08/13/2014	Date of Injury:	01/13/2014
Decision Date:	01/27/2015	UR Denial Date:	07/31/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	08/11/2014

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 Rehab, has a subspecialty in Pain Medicine 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 1/13/14. A utilization review determination dated 7/31/14 recommends non-certification of interferential unit. 7/14/14 report identifies pain in the neck, left shoulder, wrist, and elbow. Patient has completed PT, acupuncture, and chiropractic sessions. There is weakness and difficulty lifting as well as numbness in the 4th and 5th digits with paresthesia.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Interferential Unit: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Interferential Unit Page(s): 118.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 118-120.

Decision rationale: Regarding the request for interferential unit, the California 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, the records suggest failure of conservative treatment to this point, but there is no documentation that the patient has undergone an interferential unit trial with objective functional improvement and, unfortunately, there is no provision for modification of the current request to allow for a trial. In light of the above issues, the currently requested interferential unit is not medically necessary.