

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0086371		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	05/08/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	07/21/2014
<b>Decision Date:</b>	06/15/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	04/10/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	05/05/2015

### 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. 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/Service. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

The Expert Reviewer has the following credentials:

State(s) of Licensure: California

Certification(s)/Specialty: Chiropractor, Oriental Medicine

### 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(n) 31 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on 7/21/14. He reported pain in his lower back due to lifting a heavy object. The injured worker was diagnosed as having sciatica and lumbar sprain. Treatment to date has included a lumbar MRI, Celebrex, Naproxen, Tramadol and Cyclobenzaprine. As of the PR2 dated 4/6/15, the injured worker reports lower back pain that radiated to the right posterior thigh and calf. The treating physician noted limited range of motion due to pain. The treating physician requested acupuncture x 6 sessions.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**6 Visits of acupuncture:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints, Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines, Low Back - Lumbar & Thoracic (Acute & Chronic).

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

**Decision rationale:** According to 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 prior acupuncture trial with no documented improvement. Since, the provider fails to document objective functional improvement associated with acupuncture treatment, further acupuncture is not medically necessary.