

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0088339		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	05/12/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	06/02/2014
<b>Decision Date:</b>	06/18/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	04/21/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	05/07/2015

### 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: Massachusetts

Certification(s)/Specialty: Anesthesiology, Pain Management

### 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 43-year-old female who sustained an industrial injury on June 2, 2014. Previous treatment includes home exercise program, chiropractic therapy, TENS unit, medication and modified work. Currently the injured worker complains of left shoulder and thoracic lumbar pain. The injured worker reports joint pain, muscle spasm and sore muscles. On physical examination, he has tenderness to palpation of the left shoulder with trigger points. Diagnoses associated with the request include left shoulder sprain/strain and thoracic/lumbar sprain/strain with left lower extremity radiculopathy and left sacroiliac ligament strain. The treatment plan includes left shoulder trigger point injection, continuation of home exercise, continuation of home EMS and chiropractic therapy.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

#### **1 Left Shoulder Trigger Point Injection under ultrasound guidance: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Trigger Point Injection.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Trigger Point Injection Page(s): 120.

**Decision rationale:** According to the MTUS, trigger point injections are recommended only for myofascial pain syndrome as indicated below, with limited lasting value. Not recommended for radicular pain. Trigger point injections with an anesthetic such as bupivacaine are recommended for non-resolving trigger points, but the addition of a corticosteroid is not generally recommended. Not recommended for radicular pain. A trigger point is a discrete focal tenderness located in a palpable taut band of skeletal muscle, which produces a local twitch in response to stimulus to the band. Trigger points may be present in up to 33-50% of the adult population. Myofascial pain syndrome is a regional painful muscle condition with a direct relationship between a specific trigger point and its associated pain region. These injections may occasionally be necessary to maintain function in those with myofascial problems when myofascial trigger points are present on examination. Not recommended for typical back pain or neck pain. (Graff- Radford, 2004) (Nelemans-Cochrane, 2002) For fibromyalgia trigger point injections have not been proven effective. (Goldenberg, 2004). Criteria for the use of Trigger point injections: Trigger point injections with a local anesthetic may be recommended for the treatment of chronic low back or neck pain with myofascial pain syndrome when all of the following criteria are met: (1) Documentation of circumscribed trigger points with evidence upon palpation of a twitch response as well as referred pain; (2) Symptoms have persisted for more than three months; (3) Medical management therapies such as ongoing stretching exercises, physical therapy, NSAIDs and muscle relaxants have failed to control pain; (4) Radiculopathy is not present (by exam, imaging, or neuro-testing); (5) Not more than 3-4 injections per session; (6) No repeat injections unless a greater than 50% pain relief is obtained for six weeks after an injection and there is documented evidence of functional improvement; (7) Frequency should not be at an interval less than two months; (8) Trigger point injections with any substance (e.g., saline or glucose) other than local anesthetic with or without steroid are not recommended. (Colorado, 2002) (BlueCross BlueShield, 2004) According to the documents available for review, the injured worker does have a trigger point of discrete focal tenderness located in a palpable taut band of skeletal muscle. However, there is neither documentation of a local twitch in response to stimulus to the band nor documentation of failure of conservative therapy. Therefore, at this time, the requirements for treatment have not been met and the treatment is not medically necessary.