

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0181263		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	11/05/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	07/17/2006
<b>Decision Date:</b>	12/09/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	10/15/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	10/30/2014

### 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 Neurology, has a subspecialty in Neuromuscular Medicine and is licensed to practice in New Jersey. 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:

The patient is a 49-year-old man who sustained a work-related injury on July 17, 2006. Subsequently, the patient developed with chronic back pain. According to a progress report dated on April 25, 2014, the patient was complaining of fluctuating back pain without any bowel movement or urinary dysfunction. The patient physical examination demonstrated the reduced range of motion of the lumbar spine without tenderness, reduced sensation to the left posterior thigh and calf and positive straight leg rise on the left. The patient was treated with opioids and muscle relaxant medication without control of pain. The patient was diagnosed with postlaminectomy syndrome, low back pain and lumbar radiculopathy. The provider requested authorization for lumbar transforaminal epidural steroid injection.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Lumbar transforaminal epidural steroidal injection (ESI) at L4-L5 under fluoroscopy:**  
Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Epidural Steroid Injection Page(s): 46.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints Page(s): 309.

**Decision rationale:** According to MTUS guidelines, epidural steroid injection is optional for radicular pain to avoid surgery. It may offer short term benefit; however, there is no significant long term benefit or reduction for the need of surgery. Furthermore, the patient file does not document that the patient is candidate for surgery. In addition, there is no recent clinical and objective documentation of radiculopathy. MTUS guidelines do not recommend epidural injections for back pain without radiculopathy. Therefore, Lumbar Transforaminal ESI at L4-L5 under fluoroscopy is not medically necessary.