

Case Number:	CM15-0111678		
Date Assigned:	06/18/2015	Date of Injury:	07/25/2013
Decision Date:	07/21/2015	UR Denial Date:	05/14/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	06/09/2015

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:

This 50 year old male sustained an industrial injury on 7/25/13. He subsequently reported left knee pain. Diagnoses include left knee strain, chondromalacia, small popliteal cyst and joint effusion. Treatments to date include x-ray and MRI testing, knee surgery, TENS therapy, physical therapy and prescription pain medications. The injured worker continues to experience left knee pain. Upon examination, mild swelling and effusion of the left knee is noted. Tenderness over the patellar tendon is noted. Extensor mechanism strength is 4/ 5. A request for Acupuncture treatment, quantity: 12 sessions was made by the treating physician. The claimant has had six sessions of acupuncture starting on 4/9/2015. Acupuncture notes dated 6/12/15 state there are increased range of motion, muscle strength, and increased sit/stand/walking capacity.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Acupuncture treatment, quantity: 12 sessions: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines.

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 with reported benefits. However, the provider fails to document objective functional improvement associated with acupuncture treatment. Therefore further acupuncture is not medically necessary.