

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0074558		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	04/24/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	11/22/2010
<b>Decision Date:</b>	05/22/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	04/09/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	04/20/2015

### 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: Chiropractic

### 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 58 year old male sustained an industrial injury to the neck, upper back and left upper extremity on 11/22/10. Previous treatment included magnetic resonance imaging, physical therapy, chiropractic therapy, home exercise and medications. In a PR-2 dated 2/23/15, the injured worker reported a minor flare-up of pain following left C7-T1 epidural steroid injections but was starting to notice benefits. Physical exam was remarkable for cervical spine with tenderness to palpation and restricted range of motion, 5/5 upper extremity motor strength, intact sensation throughout and positive Cozan's test on the left. Current diagnoses included cervical spine sprain/strain, thoracic spine sprain/strain, left lateral epicondylitis and moderate left carpal tunnel syndrome. The treatment plan included physical therapy twice a week for three weeks, continuing upper extremity treatment with hand surgeon. On 2/23/15, a request for authorization was submitted for additional chiropractic therapy, additional 6 sessions to the cervical spine.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Chiropractic Therapy, 6 sessions, 2 times weekly for 3 weeks, Cervical Spine:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Manual therapy & manipulation Page(s): 58-59.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Manual Therapy and Manipulation Page(s): 58. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ODG Neck & Upper Back Chapter, Manipulation Section/MTUS Definitions Page 1.

**Decision rationale:** The patient has completed 6 sessions of chiropractic care to date. The PTP's findings in the records submitted for review do not show objective functional improvement with past chiropractic care rendered, per the MTUS definitions. The chiropractic treatment notes are not present in the materials provided for review. The MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines and The ODG recommend additional chiropractic care with evidence of objective functional improvement, 1-2 sessions over 4-6 months. The MTUS-Definitions page 1 defines functional improvement as a "clinically significant improvement in activities of daily living or a reduction in work restrictions as measured during the history and physical exam, performed and documented as part of the evaluation and management visit billed under the Official Medical Fee Schedule (OMFS) pursuant to Sections 9789.10-9789.11; and a reduction in the dependency on continued medical treatment." The MTUS and ODG Neck & Upper Back Chapter recommends additional chiropractic care for flare-ups "with evidence of objective functional improvement." Evidence of objective functional improvement is not present with the previously rendered care. I find that the 6 additional chiropractic sessions requested to the cervical spine to not be medically necessary and appropriate.