

Case Number:	CM15-0079362		
Date Assigned:	04/30/2015	Date of Injury:	08/22/2008
Decision Date:	05/29/2015	UR Denial Date:	04/01/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	04/24/2015

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 62 year old female who sustained an industrial injury on 8/22/08. The injured worker reported symptoms in the back and left shoulder. The injured worker was diagnosed as having lumbar stenosis with left lower back pain and L5-S1 radiculopathy and left rotator cuff syndrome. Treatments to date have included epidural injections, exercise, and medications. Currently, the injured worker complains of discomfort in the lower back and left shoulder. The plan of care was for acupuncture treatment. Per a prior review, the claimant has had multiple courses of acupuncture in the past.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Acupuncture x 6 to the low back and left shoulder: 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 of unknown quantity and duration. However, the provider fails to document objective functional improvement associated with acupuncture treatment. Therefore further acupuncture is not medically necessary.