

# COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

## DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

### General Acupuncture Protocol

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The Massachusetts General Acupuncture Protocol must be consulted when Massachusetts Treatment Guidelines do not address acupuncture treatment for a specific diagnosis. The Health Care Services Board recognizes that for certain medical conditions, as an adjunct to physical rehabilitation and/or surgical intervention for pain relief when there is a delayed recovery or when pain medication is reduced or not tolerated, acupuncture treatments may provide beneficial relief and rehabilitation of the injured employee. Acupuncture treatments may also be beneficial for injured employees who have not responded to treatment options specified in the appropriate treatment guideline. It is expected that approximately 10% of cases may fall outside of this protocol and may be reviewed and approved on a case by case basis.

#### Requirements:

- 1) Acupuncture may be authorized when ordered by a licensed MD, DC, DO, PA, NP, or PT. The ordering practitioner cannot also be the provider of the service.
- 2) There is clear documentation that the patient has not responded to appropriate and reasonable medical, surgical, and chiropractic services as set forth in the applicable treatment guideline.
- 3) Acupuncture must be performed by a health care practitioner licensed to perform acupuncture in the state where the service will be provided.

Trial of acupuncture will not exceed eight (8) visits in the first six (6) weeks unless indicated in the applicable Massachusetts Treatment Guideline. Thereafter, the ordering practitioner may request additional visits if there is documentation of objective improvement in functional activity or when the symptomatic benefit facilitates progression in the patient's treatment program. Maximum visits are not to exceed sixteen (16) visits in twelve (12) weeks.