

Inspection Report

19 October 2022



Woodford Medical Ltd

Type of service: Independent Hospital – Cosmetic laser/Intense Pulse Light and
Private Doctor Service

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Assurance, Challenge and Improvement in Health and Social Care

Information on legislation and standards underpinning inspections can be found on our website <https://www.rqia.org.uk/>, [The Independent Health Care Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2005](#) and the [Minimum Care Standards for Independent Healthcare Establishments \(July 2014\)](#)

1.0 Service information

Organisation/Registered Provider Woodford Medical Ltd	Registered Manager Dr Mervyn Patterson
Responsible Individual Dr Mervyn Patterson	Date registered 26 January 2016
Person in charge at the time of inspection: Dr Mervyn Patterson	
Categories of care: Independent Hospital (IH) PT(IL) Prescribed techniques or prescribed technology: establishments using intense light sources PT(L) Prescribed techniques or prescribed technology: establishments using Class 3B or Class 4 lasers PD- Private Doctor	
Brief description of how the service operates: Woodford Medical Ltd is registered with the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) as an Independent Hospital (IH) providing a dermatological laser and intense pulse light (IPL) service and a private doctor service. It also provides a range of cosmetic/aesthetic treatments. This inspection focused solely on those treatments that fall within regulated activity and the categories of care for which the establishment is registered.	
Equipment available in the service: Laser and IPL equipment Manufacturer: Palomar Model: Starlux 500 IPL Serial Number: 55-0209 Laser Class: 4	
Laser protection advisor (LPA): Mr Godfrey Town	
Laser protection supervisors (LPS): Dr Mervyn Patterson Mrs Kerry Patterson	
Medical support services: Dr Mervyn Patterson	
Authorised operators: Dr Mervyn Patterson	

Mrs Kerry Patterson
Ms Rachel McCollum

Types of laser treatments:

Skin rejuvenation
Fractional resurfacing
Treatment of scars

Types of IPL treatments:

Photo rejuvenation
Epilation (hair removal)

2.0 Inspection summary

This was an announced inspection, undertaken by a care inspector on 19 October 2022 from 10:00 am to 2.00 pm.

The Palomar Starlux 500 IPL machine provided to treat clients is a multi-platform machine and during the previous inspection it was identified that a laser handpiece has been purchased for this machine. Woodford Medical Ltd did not have a laser category of care and RQIA advised that before laser treatments are provided a variation to registration application to add a PT(L) Prescribed techniques or prescribed technology: establishments using Class 3B or Class 4 lasers category of care must be submitted to RQIA and approved. During this inspection Dr Patterson confirmed that an application had been submitted to RQIA. Following this inspection the variation to registration application to add a PT(L) category of care was approved.

The purpose of the inspection was to assess progress with areas for improvement identified during the last care inspection and to assess compliance with the legislation and minimum standards.

There was evidence of good practice concerning: staffing; staff recruitment; safeguarding; laser safety; management of medical emergencies; infection prevention and control (IPC); the management of COVID-19; the management of clinical records; the client care pathway and effective communication between clients and staff.

Additional areas of good practice identified included maintaining client confidentiality, ensuring the core values of privacy and dignity were upheld and providing the relevant information to allow clients to make informed choices.

No immediate concerns were identified regarding the delivery of front line client care.

3.0 How we inspect

RQIA is required to inspect registered services in accordance with legislation. To do this, we gather and review the information we hold about the service, examine a variety of relevant records, meet and talk with staff and management and observe practices on the day of the inspection.

The inspection process included a review of a range of information relevant to the service and the variation to registration application. This included the following records:

- the submitted variation to registration application
- the updated statement of purpose
- the updated client guide
- documentation in relation to laser safety

The information obtained is then considered before a determination is made on whether the establishment is operating in accordance with the relevant legislation and minimum standards. Examples of good practice are acknowledged and any areas for improvement are discussed with the person in charge and detailed in the quality improvement plan (QIP).

4.0 What people told us about the service

Clients were present on the day of the inspection. The inspector spoke with one client who spoke positively regarding the care and treatment they had received.

Posters were issued to Woodford Medical Ltd by RQIA prior to the inspection inviting clients and staff to complete an electronic questionnaire. No completed client or staff questionnaires were submitted to RQIA prior to the inspection.

5.0 The inspection

5.1 What has this service done to meet any areas for improvement identified at or since last inspection?

Areas for improvement from the last inspection on 1 July 2021		
Action required to ensure compliance with The Independent Health Care Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005		Validation of compliance
Area for improvement 1 Ref: Regulation 12 Stated: First time	Area for improvement: The responsible individual shall submit a variation to registration application on behalf of Woodford Medical Ltd to add the following category of care: PT(L) Prescribed techniques or prescribed technology: establishments using Class 3B or Class 4 lasers. The appropriate fee and supporting documentation	Met

	(amended statement of purpose and client guide) must be submitted with the application.	
	<p>Action taken as confirmed during the inspection:</p> <p>During the inspection it was confirmed that a variation to registration application had been submitted to RQIA on behalf of Woodford Medical Ltd to add the following category of care: PT(L) Prescribed techniques or prescribed technology: establishments using Class 3B or Class 4 lasers. The appropriate fee and supporting documentation was also submitted with the application.</p>	

5.2 Inspection outcome

5.2.1 How does this service ensure that staffing levels are safe to meet the needs of clients?

Dr Patterson told us that there is sufficient staff in the various roles to fulfil the needs of the establishment and clients. It was confirmed that treatments using the Palomar Starlux 500 machine are only carried out by authorised operators. A register of authorised operators for the Palomar Starlux 500 machine has been maintained and kept up to date.

A review of training records evidenced that authorised operators had up to date training in core of knowledge, application training for the equipment in use and basic life support. Two of the three authorised operators had up to date training in IPC, fire safety and safeguarding adults keeping with the RQIA training guidance. One of the authorised operators did not have evidence of up to date training in IPC, fire safety and safeguarding adults. This was discussed and following the inspection evidence of this training was submitted to RQIA by email on 15 November 2022.

All other staff employed in Woodford Medical Ltd, but not directly involved in the use of the Palomar Starlux 500 machine, had received laser safety awareness training.

It was confirmed that Dr Patterson is the only private doctor providing treatments in Woodford Medical Ltd. A review of Dr Patterson's details confirmed there was evidence of the following:

- confirmation of identity
- current General Medical Council (GMC) registration
- professional indemnity insurance
- qualifications in line with services provided
- ongoing professional development and continued medical education that meets the requirements of the Royal Colleges and GMC
- evidence of ongoing annual appraisal by a trained medical appraiser
- an appointed responsible officer
- arrangements for revalidation

Evidence was available that staff who have professional registration undertake continuing professional development (CPD) in accordance with their professional body's recommendations. A review of documentation confirmed that authorised operators take part in appraisal on an annual basis.

The service has sufficient staff in place to meet the needs of clients.

5.2.2 How does the service ensure that recruitment and selection procedures are safe?

Recruitment and selection policies and procedures, that adhered to legislation and best practice guidance for the recruitment of authorised operators were in place. Discussion with staff confirmed that should staff be recruited in the future all the required recruitment documentation will be sought and retained for inspection.

It was confirmed that any authorised operators or private doctors will be recruited in accordance with Schedule 2 of The Independent Health Care Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005.

5.2.3 How does the service ensure that it is equipped to manage a safeguarding issue should it arise?

Dr Patterson confirmed that treatments using the Palomar Starlux 500 machine are not provided to persons under the age of 18 years.

Policies and procedures were in place for the safeguarding and protection of adults and children at risk of harm. The policies included the types and indicators of abuse and distinct referral pathways in the event of a safeguarding issue arising with an adult or child. The relevant contact details were included for onward referral to the local Health and Social Care Trust should a safeguarding issue arise.

Discussion with authorised operators confirmed that they were aware of the types and indicators of abuse and the actions to be taken in the event of a safeguarding issue being identified.

Review of records demonstrated that the safeguarding lead, has completed formal training in safeguarding adults in keeping with the Northern Ireland Adult Safeguarding Partnership (NIASP) training strategy (revised 2016) and minimum standards.

It was confirmed that copies of the regional policy entitled Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (August 2017) and the regional guidance document entitled Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership (July 2015) were available for reference.

The service had appropriate arrangements in place to manage a safeguarding issue should it arise.

5.2.4 How does the service ensure that medical emergency procedures are safe?

The private doctor and all other authorised operators have up to date training in basic life support and staff were aware of what action to take in the event of a medical emergency. There was a resuscitation policy in place and a review of this evidenced that it was comprehensive, reflected legislation and best practice guidance.

The storage arrangements for the injectable medication used by Dr Patterson were reviewed and found to be in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Adrenaline is available for use in the event of an anaphylaxis event and systems were in place to ensure that medicines do not exceed their expiry date and are immediately available.

The service had appropriate arrangements in place to manage a medical emergency.

5.2.5 How does the service ensure that it adheres to infection prevention and control and decontamination procedures?

The IPC arrangements were reviewed throughout the establishment to evidence that the risk of infection transmission to clients, visitors and staff was minimised.

There was an overarching IPC policy and associated procedures in place. A review of these documents demonstrated that they were comprehensive and reflected legislation and best practice guidance in all areas.

The treatment room that the Palomar Starlux 500 machine is used in and other rooms used by the private doctor were found to be clean and clutter free. Discussion with authorised operators evidenced that appropriate procedures were in place for the decontamination of equipment between use. Hand washing facilities were available and adequate supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE) were provided. As discussed previously, two of the three authorised operators had up to date training in IPC in keeping with the RQIA training guidance and following the inspection evidence of the third authorised operator training was submitted to RQIA by email on 15 November 2022.

The service had appropriate arrangements in place in relation to IPC and decontamination.

5.2.6 Are arrangements in place to minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission?

COVID-19 has been declared as a public health emergency and we all need to assess and manage the risks of COVID-19, and in particular, businesses need to consider the risks to their clients and staff.

The management of operations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic were discussed with staff who outlined the measures taken by Woodford Medical Ltd to ensure current best practice measures are in place. Appropriate arrangements are in place in relation to maintaining social distancing; implementation of enhanced IPC procedures; and the client pathway to include COVID-19 screening prior to attending appointments.

The management of COVID-19 was in line with best practice guidance and it was determined that appropriate actions had been taken in this regard.

5.2.7 How does the service ensure the environment is safe?

The service has one treatment room that provides treatments using the Palomar Starlux 500 machine and other treatment rooms used by the private doctor. The premises were maintained to a good standard of maintenance and décor. Cleaning schedules for the establishment were in place.

Observations made evidenced that a carbon dioxide (CO₂) fire extinguisher is available which has been serviced within the last year.

It was determined that appropriate arrangements were in place to maintain the environment.

5.2.8 How does the service ensure that laser and IPL procedures are safe?

A laser safety file was in place which contained the relevant information in relation to the Palomar Starlux 500 equipment. There was written confirmation of the appointment and duties of a certified LPA which is reviewed on an annual basis. The service level agreement between the establishment and the LPA was reviewed and this expires on 20 September 2023.

Up to date, local rules were in place which has been developed by the LPA. The local rules contained the relevant information about the Palomar Starlux 500 equipment being used.

The establishment's LPA completed a risk assessment of the premises during September 2022 and all recommendations made by the LPA have been addressed.

Staff told us that any treatments using the Palomar Starlux 500 machine are carried out following medical treatment protocols. The medical treatment protocols had been produced by Dr Patterson as the named registered medical practitioner. The medical treatment protocols are due to expire during September 2023 and systems are in place to review these when due. The medical treatment protocols contained the relevant information about the treatments being provided.

Dr Patterson and a second authorised operator are named as the laser protection supervisors (LPS) who have overall responsibility for safety during treatments using the Palomar Starlux 500 machine and a list of authorised operators is maintained. It was identified that not all of the authorised operators had signed to state that they had read and understood the local rules and medical treatment protocols however this was addressed immediately following the inspection.

When the Palomar Starlux 500 machine is in use, the safety of all persons in the controlled area is the responsibility of the LPS's.

The environment in which the Palomar Starlux 500 machine is used was found to be safe and controlled to protect other persons while treatment is in progress. The treatment room has a second door that can be used to access an adjoining office. Staff confirmed that both doors are locked when treatments are being provided. Authorised operators were aware that the laser safety warning signs should only be displayed when the Palomar Starlux 500 machine is in use and removed when not in use. These measures will ensure that the controlled area is clearly defined and not used for other purposes, or as access to areas, when treatment is being carried out.

The Palomar Starlux 500 machine is operated using a key. Arrangements are in place for the safe custody of the key when not in use. Protective eyewear is available for the client and operator as outlined in the local rules.

Woodford Medical Ltd has one register, this register clearly states when IPL and laser treatments have been carried out. Authorised operators told us that they complete the relevant register every time the equipment is operated, the register includes:

- the name of the person treated
- the date
- the operator
- the treatment given
- the precise exposure
- any accident or adverse incident

There are arrangements in place to service and maintain the Palomar Starlux 500 equipment in line with the manufacturer's guidance. The most recent service report dated 24 June 2022 was reviewed.

It was determined that appropriate arrangements were in place to operate the Palomar Starlux 500 equipment.

5.2.9 How does the service ensure that clients have a planned programme of care and have sufficient information to consent to treatment?

Clients are provided with an initial consultation to discuss their treatment and any concerns they may have. Written information is provided to the client pre and post treatment which outlines the treatment provided, any risks, complications and expected outcomes. The service has a list of fees available for each laser and IPL procedure.

Fees for treatments are agreed during the initial consultation and may vary depending on the type of treatment provided and the individual requirements of the client.

During the initial consultation, clients are asked to complete a health questionnaire. There are systems in place to contact the client's general practitioner (GP), with their consent, for further information if necessary.

A random selection of care records were reviewed in relation to the treatments carried out using the Palomar Starlux 500 machine and in relation to the private doctor service. There was an accurate and up to date treatment record for every client which included:

- client details
- medical history
- signed consent form
- skin assessment (where appropriate)
- patch test (where appropriate)
- record of treatment delivered including number of shots and fluence settings (where appropriate)
- record of injectable medication administered (where applicable)

Observations made evidenced that client records are securely stored. A policy and procedure was available which included the creation, storage, recording, retention and disposal of records and data protection.

5.2.10 How does the service ensure that clients are treated with dignity and respect and are involved in the decision making process?

Discussion with one of the authorised operators regarding the consultation and treatment process confirmed that clients are treated with dignity and respect. The consultation and treatments are provided in a private room with the client and authorised operator present for treatments using the Palomar Starlux 500 machine and for treatments provided by Dr Patterson for private doctor services.

Information is provided to the client in verbal and written form at the initial consultation and subsequent treatment sessions to allow the client to make choices about their care and treatment and provide informed consent.

Appropriate measures are in place to maintain client confidentiality and observations made evidenced that client care records were stored securely in a lockable storage case.

5.2.11 How does the responsible individual assure themselves of the quality of the services provided?

Dr Patterson is based in England and he provides the private doctor services in Woodford Medical Ltd for a period of one week every month. There is a nominated individual with overall responsibility for the day to day management of the establishment when Dr Patterson is not onsite.

Where the entity operating the service is a corporate body or partnership or an individual owner who is not in day to day management of the service, Regulation 26 unannounced quality monitoring visits must be undertaken and documented every six months.

During the inspection records were not available to evidence that Dr Patterson undertakes six monthly unannounced quality monitoring visits. This was discussed and following the inspection RQIA received confirmation that Dr Patterson would be undertaking a quality monitoring visit during November 2022 and would ensure that a report is generated following this visit.

Policies and procedures were available outlining the arrangements associated with the treatments using the Palomar Starlux 500 machine and associated with the private doctor's service. Observations made confirmed that policies and procedures were indexed, dated and systematically reviewed on a three yearly basis or more frequently if required.

A copy of the complaints procedure was available in the establishment. Staff evidenced a good awareness of complaints management. The complaints policy should be revised to include RQIA'S new address.

Staff confirmed that a system was in place to ensure that notifiable events were investigated and reported to RQIA or other relevant bodies as appropriate. It was advised that the local

rules were amended to include accurate details regarding the most up to date reporting arrangements.

A copy of the statement of purpose and client's guide were submitted following the inspection. A review evidenced that both the statement of purpose and client guide needed to be further developed in line with legislation. Following the inspection copies of the revised statement of purpose and client's guide were submitted to RQIA by email. It was advised that these documents are kept under review, revised and updated when necessary and available on request.

The RQIA certificate of registration was displayed in a prominent place.

Observation of insurance documentation confirmed that current insurance policies were in place.

5.2.12 Does the service have suitable arrangements in place to record equality data?

The arrangements in place in relation to the equality of opportunity for clients and the importance of staff being aware of equality legislation and recognising and responding to the diverse needs of clients was discussed with staff.

Discussion with staff and review of information evidenced that the equality data collected was managed in line with best practice.

5.2.13 Additional areas reviewed – registration status of Woodford Medical Ltd

As discussed in sections 2.0 and section 2.1 of this report, prior to the previous inspection a laser handpiece had been purchased for the Palomar Starlux 500 machine.

During the inspection Dr Patterson confirmed that a variation to registration application on behalf of Woodford Medical Ltd to add a PT(L) Prescribed techniques or prescribed technology: establishments using Class 3B or Class 4 lasers category of care had been submitted to RQIA. The appropriate fee and amended statement of purpose and client guide reflecting that the establishment now offers laser treatments were also submitted with the variation application.

Following this inspection the variation to registration application to add a PT(L) category of care was approved.

6.0 Quality Improvement Plan/Areas for Improvement

	Regulations	Standards
Total number of Areas for Improvement	0	0

This inspection resulted in no areas for improvement being identified. Dr Patterson was not available at the conclusion of the inspection for feedback and the findings of the inspection were discussed with one of the authorised operators as part of the inspection process and can be found in the main body of the report.



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