

Inspection Report

15 October 2024



Skin Medi Spa

Type of service: Independent Hospital - Cosmetic Laser\Intense Pulsed Light
Address: 1 Surrey Street, Lisburn Road, Belfast, BT9 7FR
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www.rqia.org.uk

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 [Minimum Care Standards for Independent Healthcare Establishments \(July 2014\)](#)

1.0 Service information

Organisation/Provider: Ms Judith Mulgrew	Registered Manager: Ms Judith Mulgrew Date registered: 22 February 2017
Person in charge at the time of inspection: Ms Judith Mulgrew	
Categories of care: Independent Hospital (IH) Prescribed techniques or prescribed technology: establishments using Class 3B or Class 4 lasers PT(L) and Prescribed techniques or prescribed technology: establishments using intense light sources PT(IL)	
Brief description of how the service operates: Skin Medi Spa is registered with the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) as an Independent Hospital (IH) with the following categories of care: PT(L) Prescribed techniques or prescribed technology: establishments using Class 3B or Class 4 lasers and PT(IL) Prescribed techniques or prescribed technology: establishments using intense light sources. There is currently no laser equipment in use and the establishment is offering treatments using intense light sources. Skin Medi Spa also provides a range of cosmetic/aesthetic treatments. This inspection focused solely on those treatments using an intense pulse light (IPL) machine that fall within regulated activity and the categories of care for which the establishment is registered with RQIA. Equipment available in the service: IPL equipment: Manufacturer: Lumenis Model: Quantum SR Serial Number: 3501000 Wavelength: 515 – 1200nm Hand Pieces: SHR 560nm and hair removal 695nm	

Types of IPL treatments provided:

Hair removal
 Skin rejuvenation
 Red vein
 Acne
 Skin pigmentation

2.0 Inspection summary

This was an announced inspection, undertaken by a care inspector on 15 October 2024 from 10.00 am to 1.50 pm.

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 staff recruitment; authorised operator training; safeguarding; IPL safety; management of medical emergencies; infection prevention and control; the management of clinical records; 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 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 not present on the day of the inspection and client feedback was assessed by reviewing the most recent client satisfaction surveys completed by Skin Medi Spa.

Posters were issued to Skin Medi Spa 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 26 September 2023		
Action required to ensure compliance with Minimum Care Standards for Independent Healthcare Establishments (July 2014)		Validation of compliance
Area for Improvement 1 Ref: Standard 19.5 Stated: Second time	The registered person shall ensure that policies and procedures are reviewed and updated as necessary.	Met
	Action taken as confirmed during the inspection: This area for improvement has been assessed as met. Further detail is provided in section 5.2.10	

5.2 Inspection outcome

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

Ms Mulgrew told us that IPL treatments are carried out by her as the authorised operator. The register of authorised operators for the IPL machine reflects that Ms Mulgrew is the authorised operator.

A review of training records evidenced that Ms Mulgrew has up to date training in core of knowledge training, application training for the equipment in use, basic life support, infection prevention and control, fire safety awareness and safeguarding adults at risk of harm in keeping with the RQIA training guidance.

It was determined that appropriate staffing levels were in place to meet the needs of clients and that staff are suitably trained.

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

There have been no authorised operators recruited since the previous inspection. During discussion Ms Mulgrew confirmed that should authorised operators be recruited in the future all recruitment documentation as outlined in Schedule 2 of The Independent Health Care Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005 would be sought and retained for inspection.

Discussion with Ms Mulgrew confirmed that she had a clear understanding of the legislation and best practice guidance in relation to recruitment and selection.

It was determined that the recruitment of authorised operators complies with the legislation and best practice guidance.

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

Ms Mulgrew stated that IPL treatments are not provided to persons under the age of 18 years.

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

Discussion with Ms Mulgrew confirmed that she was 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 Ms Mulgrew, as the safeguarding lead, has completed formal level two 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 a copy of the regional guidance document entitled Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership (July 2015) was available for reference.

It was determined that 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?

Ms Mulgrew had up to date training in basic life support and was aware of what action to take in the event of a medical emergency. There was a written protocol in place for dealing with recognised medical emergencies.

It was determined that 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 (IPC) 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.

The IPL treatment room was clean and clutter free. Discussion with Ms Mulgrew 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, Ms Mulgrew had up to date training in IPC.

Ms Mulgrew is aware that advisory information, guidance and alerts with regards to IPC is available on the Department of Health (DOH) and Public Health Agency (PHA) websites.

It was determined that the service had appropriate arrangements in place in relation to IPC and decontamination.

5.2.6 How does the service ensure the environment is safe?

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.

5.2.7 How does the service ensure that IPL procedures are safe?

A laser safety file was in place which contained the relevant information in relation to IPL equipment. There was written confirmation of the appointment and duties of a certified laser protection advisor (LPA) which is reviewed on an annual basis. The service level agreement between the establishment and the LPA was reviewed and this expires during April 2025.

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

The establishment's LPA completed a risk assessment of the premises during May 2023 and the service level agreement between the LPA and Skin Medi Spa confirmed that the risk assessment remains valid until April 2025. All recommendations made by the LPA have been addressed.

Ms Mulgrew confirmed that IPL procedures are carried out following medical treatment protocols. The medical treatment protocols had been produced by a named registered medical practitioner. It was demonstrated that the protocols contained the relevant information about the treatments being provided and are due to expire during September 2025. It was established that systems are in place to review the medical treatment protocols when due.

Ms Mulgrew, as the laser protection supervisor (LPS) and authorised operator has overall responsibility for safety during IPL treatments and a list of authorised operators is maintained. Ms Mulgrew had signed to state that she had read and understood the local rules and medical treatment protocols.

When the IPL equipment is in use, the safety of all persons in the controlled area is the responsibility of the LPS.

The environment in which the IPL equipment is used was found to be safe and controlled to protect other persons while treatment is in progress. The controlled area is clearly defined and not used for other purposes, or as access to areas, when treatment is being carried out.

The door to the treatment room is locked when the IPL equipment is in use but can be opened from the outside in the event of an emergency. Ms Mulgrew was aware that the laser safety warning signs should only be displayed when the IPL equipment is in use and removed when not in use.

The IPL machine is operated using a key. Arrangements are in place for the safe custody of the key when not in use. Ms Mulgrew was advised to develop a policy for the safe keeping of the IPL key and following the inspection documentation was provided to Ms Mulgrew to assist in this regard. Protective eyewear is available for the client and operator as outlined in the local rules.

Skin Medi Spa has an IPL register. Ms Mulgrew told us that she completes the relevant section of the register every time the equipment is operated. The register reviewed included:

- 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 IPL equipment in line with the manufacturer's guidance. The most recent service report of the IPL machine was reviewed.

It was determined that appropriate arrangements were in place to operate the IPL equipment.

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

Ms Mulgrew confirmed that clients are provided with an initial consultation to discuss their treatment and any concerns they may have. There is written information for clients that provides a clear explanation of any treatment and includes effects, side-effects, risks, complications and expected outcomes.

The service has a list of fees available for each 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 each client's personal information is recorded including their general practitioner (GP) details in keeping with legislative requirements and clients are asked to complete a health questionnaire.

Two client care records were reviewed. 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)

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.

Advice and guidance was provided to Ms Mulgrew to develop a policy for advertising and marketing. Following the inspection documentation was provided to Ms Mulgrew to provide assistance in this regard.

It was determined that appropriate arrangements were in place to ensure that clients have a planned programme of care and have sufficient information to consent to treatment.

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

Discussion with Ms Mulgrew regarding the consultation and treatment process confirmed that clients are treated with dignity and respect. The consultation and treatment are provided in a private room with the client and authorised operator present. 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.

Ms Mulgrew told us that clients are provided with the opportunity to complete a satisfaction survey when their treatment is complete. The results of these are collated to provide an anonymised summary report which is made available to clients and other interested parties. Ms Mulgrew confirmed that an action plan would be developed to inform and improve services provided, if appropriate.

Review of the most recent client satisfaction report for 2023/2024 found that clients were highly satisfied with the quality of treatment, information and care received.

It was determined that appropriate arrangements were in place to ensure that clients are treated with dignity, respect and are involved in decisions regarding their choice of treatment.

5.2.10 How does the registered provider assure themselves of the quality of the services provided?

Where the business entity operating the service is a corporate body or partnership or an individual owner who is not in day to day management of the establishment, unannounced quality monitoring visits by the registered provider must be undertaken and documented every six months; as required by Regulation 26 of The Independent Health Care Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005.

Ms Mulgrew was in day to day management of the establishment, therefore the unannounced quality monitoring visits by the registered provider are not applicable.

Policies and procedures were available outlining the arrangements associated with the IPL treatments. Observations made confirmed that policies and procedures were indexed, dated and systematically reviewed on a three yearly basis or more frequently if required. Therefore, the previous area for improvement 1, made against the standards and as outlined in section 5.1, has been met.

The arrangements for the management of complaints and incidents were reviewed to ensure that they were being managed in keeping with legislation and best practice guidance.

The complaints policy and procedure provided clear instructions for patients and staff to follow. Clients were made aware of how to make a complaint by way of the client's guide.

Arrangements were in place to record any complaint received in a complaints register and retain all relevant records including details of any investigation undertaken, all communication with complainants, the outcome of the complaint and the complainant's level of satisfaction.

Discussion with Ms Mulgrew confirmed that no complaints had been received since the previous inspection.

Discussion with Ms Mulgrew confirmed that an incident policy and procedure was in place which includes the reporting arrangements to RQIA. Ms Mulgrew confirmed that incidents would be effectively documented and investigated in line with legislation. All relevant incidents are reported to RQIA and other relevant organisations in accordance with legislation and RQIA Statutory Notification of Incidents and Deaths. Ms Mulgrew is aware that arrangements are to be in place to audit adverse incidents to identify trends and improve service provided.

Ms Mulgrew demonstrated a clear understanding of her role and responsibility in accordance with legislation.

Ms Mulgrew confirmed that the statement of purpose and client's guide 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.

It was determined that suitable arrangements are in place to enable Ms Mulgrew to assure herself of the quality of the services provided.

5.2.11 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 Ms Mulgrew.

6.0 Quality Improvement Plan/Areas for Improvement

This inspection resulted in no areas for improvement being identified. Findings of the inspection were discussed with Ms Mulgrew, Registered Person, as part of the inspection process and can be found in the main body of the report.



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