

Inspection Report

19 February 2025



Alora Rejuvenation Clinic

Type of service: Independent Hospital - Cosmetic Laser\Intense Pulsed Light
Address: 10 Russell Street, Armagh, BT61 9AA
Telephone number: 028 3744 0647

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

<p>Organisation/Provider: Alora Rejuvenation Limited</p> <p>Responsible Individual: Ms Ciara Elmore</p>	<p>Registered Manager: Ms Louise Finnighan-Linkins</p> <p>Date registered: 16 January 2023</p>
<p>Person in charge at the time of inspection: Ms Louise Finnighan-Linkins</p>	
<p>Categories of care: Independent Hospital (IH) Prescribed techniques or prescribed technology: establishments using Class 3B or Class 4 lasers PT(L) Prescribed techniques or prescribed technology: establishments using intense light sources PT(IL)</p>	
<p>Brief description of how the service operates: Alora Rejuvenation Clinic 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.</p> <p>Alora Rejuvenation Clinic also provides a range of cosmetic/aesthetic treatments. This inspection focused solely on those treatments using a Class 4 laser and an intense pulse light (IPL) machine that fall within regulated activity and the categories of care for which the establishment is registered with RQIA.</p> <p>Equipment available in the service:</p> <p>Laser equipment: Manufacturer: Cynosure Model: Elite IQ Serial Number: M221A-RL221714 Laser Class: 4 Wavelength: 755nm and 1064nm</p> <p>Manufacturer: Cynosure Model: Picosure Pro Serial Number: P3000165 Laser Class: 4</p>	

Wavelength: 532nm, 755nm and 1064nm

Multi platform equipment:

Manufacturer: Sciton

Model: mJoule

Serial Number: 52042

Hand Pieces: Various hand pieces ranging from 1064 nm, 1927nm and 420nm

Types of laser treatments provided:

Cynosure Elite iQ - Hair removal

Cynosure Picosure Pro -Tattoo removal, Skin rejuvenation, Pigmentation

Types of multi platform treatments provided:

Sciton mJoule - Skin rejuvenation, Pigmentation

2.0 Inspection summary

This was an announced inspection, undertaken by a care inspector on 19 February 2025 from 10.00 am to 1.00 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; laser and 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 Alora Rejuvenation Clinic.

Posters were issued to Alora Rejuvenation Clinic 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?

The last inspection to Alora Rejuvenation Clinic was undertaken on 25 July 2023; no areas for improvement were identified.

5.2 Inspection outcome

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

Ms Finnighan-Linkins told us there are sufficient staff in the various roles to fulfil the needs of the establishment and clients.

Ms Finnighan-Linkins confirmed that laser and IPL treatments are only carried out by authorised operators. A register of authorised operators for the laser and IPL is maintained and kept up to date.

A review of completed induction programmes evidenced that induction training is provided to new staff on commencement of employment.

A review of training records evidenced that authorised operators have 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.

All other staff employed at the establishment, but not directly involved in the use of the laser and IPL equipment, had received laser safety awareness training.

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?

Recruitment and selection policies and procedures were in place, which adhered to legislation and best practice guidance for the recruitment of authorised operators. These arrangements will ensure that all required recruitment documentation has been sought and retained for inspection.

A review of one personnel file of an authorised operator recruited since the previous inspection and discussion with Ms Finnighan-Linkins confirmed that staff, in general, have been recruited as outlined in Schedule 2 of The Independent Health Care Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005. Advice was provided to ensure that two written references are sought prior to the commencement of employment and references dated.

There was evidence of job descriptions and induction checklists for authorised operators.

Discussion with Ms Finnighan-Linkins 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 Finnighan-Linkins stated that laser and 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 and children 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 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 Ms Finnighan-Linkins 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 Finnighan-Linkins 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 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.

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?

All authorised operators had up to date training in basic life support and were 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 laser and IPL treatment rooms were clean and clutter free. Discussion with Ms Finnighan-Linkins 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, authorised operators had up to date training in IPC.

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 laser and IPL procedures are safe?

A laser safety file was in place which contained the relevant information in relation to laser and 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 on 1 August 2024.

Up to date, local rules were in place which have been developed by the LPA. Three sets of local rules were in place; one for each laser machine and one for the multi platform machine. The local rules contained the relevant information about the laser and IPL equipment being used.

The establishment's LPA completed a risk assessment of the premises during October 2024 and all recommendations made by the LPA have been addressed.

Ms Finnighan-Linkins confirmed that laser and 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 February 2026. It was established that systems are in place to review the medical treatment protocols when due.

Review of client records noted that the Fitzpatrick skin type assessment outlined in the medical treatment protocols had not been recorded and a different skin assessment tool was being used. Ms Finnighan-Linkins was reminded that the medical treatment protocols should be strictly adhered to. Following the inspection Ms Finnighan-Linkins submitted evidence that she had contacted the author of the medical treatment protocols and he had advised that the Fitzpatrick skin type assessment tool must be used as part of the client's skin assessment prior to treatment. Ms Finnighan-Linkins confirmed that the Fitzpatrick skin type assessment tool had been implemented and will be recorded for all future clients.

It was also noted that the authorised operators had not signed that they had read and understood the most recent medical treatment protocols and this was addressed following the inspection.

Ms Finnighan-Linkins, as the laser protection supervisor (LPS) and authorised operator has overall responsibility for safety during laser and IPL treatments and a list of authorised operators is maintained. Authorised operators had signed to state that they had read and understood the local rules.

When the laser and 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 laser and 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 laser and IPL equipment is in use but can be opened from the outside in the event of an emergency. Authorised operators were aware that the laser safety warning signs should only be displayed when the laser or IPL equipment is in use and removed when not in use.

The laser and IPL machines are operated using a key. Arrangements are in place for the safe custody of the keys when not in use. Protective eyewear is available for the client and operator as outlined in the local rules.

Alora Rejuvenation Clinic has laser and IPL registers. Authorised operators told us that they complete the relevant section of the registers every time the equipment is operated. The registers reviewed included:

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

The type of treatment given was not fully outlined in the registers and it was advised to amend the registers to ensure that this information is recorded. Following the inspection Ms Finnighan-Linkins submitted evidence to RQIA that an additional column had been added to the registers to record the type of treatment provided.

There are arrangements in place to service and maintain the laser and IPL equipment in line with the manufacturers' guidance. The most recent service reports of the IPL and lasers were reviewed.

It was determined that appropriate arrangements were in place to operate the laser and 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 Finnighan-Linkins 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 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 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.

Four electronic client care records were reviewed. There was in the main, an accurate and up to date treatment record for every client which included:

- client details
- medical history
- skin assessment (where appropriate)
- patch test (where appropriate)
- record of treatment delivered including number of shots and fluence settings (where appropriate)

It was noted that clients provided an electronic signature on completion of the assessment component of the electronic record. Ms Finnighan-Linkins outlined this signature was taken as the client's consent to treatment. It was advised that a separate consent form should be established that includes the client details, the date, the type of treatment, the risks and potential complications and it should be signed by both the client and the authorised operator. Following the inspection Ms Finnighan-Linkins submitted evidence to RQIA that an electronic client consent form was being established as outlined above.

As previously stated in section 5.2.7 the Fitzpatrick skin type assessment was not outlined in client records and action has been taken on this matter.

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.

The service has a policy for advertising and marketing.

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 Finnighan-Linkins 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 Finnighan-Linkins told us that clients are provided with the opportunity to complete a satisfaction survey when their treatment is complete. The results of the surveys are collated to provide an anonymised report and an action plan developed to inform and improve services provided, if appropriate. However, the most recent report had not been made available to clients and other interested parties. Advice was provided on this matter and Ms Finnighan-Linkins gave assurances that this would be addressed.

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 practice, 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 Finnighan-Linkins confirmed that Ms Elmore was in day to day management of the clinic, therefore the unannounced quality monitoring visits by the registered provider are not applicable.

Policies and procedures were available outlining the arrangements associated with the laser and 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.

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 clients 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.

A review of records confirmed that no complaints had been received since the previous inspection.

Discussion with Ms Finnighan-Linkins confirmed that an incident policy and procedure was in place which includes the reporting arrangements to RQIA. Ms Finnighan-Linkins 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](#). Arrangements are in place to audit adverse incidents to identify trends and improve service provided.

Ms Finnighan-Linkins demonstrated a clear understanding of her role and responsibility in accordance with legislation.

Ms Finnighan-Linkins confirmed that the statement of purpose and client's guide are kept under review, revised and updated when necessary and available on request. It was noted the client guide did not outline RQIA's current address. Following the inspection evidence was submitted to RQIA that the client guide had been amended accordingly.

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 the responsible individual to assure themselves 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 Finnighan-Linkins.

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. Findings of the inspection were discussed with Ms Finnighan-Linkins ,Registered Manager as part of the inspection process and can be found in the main body of the report.



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