

Licensing – Use of Laser Apparatus for Hair Removal

The *Radiation Safety Act 1999* requires all persons who use radiation apparatus to hold an appropriate licence issued by the Chief Executive, Queensland Health. These use licences may only be issued to persons who have appropriate skills and knowledge of the principles and practices of radiation protection, as well as expertise in the use of the radiation apparatus. Under the Act, laser apparatus is considered to be radiation apparatus.

This information sheet outlines the licensing requirements for persons who wish to use laser apparatus for hair removal.

What is a laser apparatus?

Laser apparatus is:

- (a) a laser that could reasonably be used to carry out a diagnostic, therapeutic or cosmetic procedure involving the irradiation of a person
- (b) an apparatus that, if assembled or repaired, and when energised, is capable of emitting an amount of non-ionising radiation higher than the accessible emission limit for a class 3B laser for the relevant period, stated in, and measured in accordance with, the laser standard AS2211 (ie. a class 4 laser).

When is a licence required?

All persons who use laser apparatus must hold an appropriate use licence issued under the *Radiation Safety Act 1999*.

Knowledge and practical competencies

The practice of hair removal does not just involve the use of laser apparatus, it also requires an understanding of biology, physiology, pathology, anatomy of skin, types of skin lesions, wound healing, scar management and pain management. Persons seeking a licence to use laser apparatus for hair removal are therefore required to demonstrate an appropriate level of knowledge in laser safety and competency in the use of the laser apparatus.

It is considered appropriate that persons who obtain a licence to use laser apparatus for hair removal, and who are not medical practitioners, enlist the assistance of a medical practitioner in the case of injuries or allergic reactions during laser procedures.

Eligibility for a licence

Applicants will be considered eligible for a licence to use laser apparatus for hair removal if, in addition to completing the application form and providing the appropriate licence fee, they meet the requirements of one of the following alternatives:

Alternative One

Applicants must:

- provide evidence of their current registration as a medical practitioner with the Medical Board of Queensland
- provide evidence that they have satisfactorily completed a laser safety course, specifically approved by the Director, Radiation Health Unit for the training of persons seeking a licence to use laser apparatus for hair removal, within three years of the application being submitted
- be able to demonstrate to the Chief Executive, Queensland Health that they have sufficient knowledge and experience in the use of laser apparatus for hair removal. Verification of use from a colleague or a statement detailing the applicant's work history relevant to the use of laser apparatus may be acceptable.

Alternative Two

Applicants must:

- provide evidence that they have satisfactorily completed a laser safety course, specifically approved by the Director, Radiation Health Unit for the training of persons seeking a licence to use laser apparatus for hair removal, within three years of the application being submitted
- be able to demonstrate to the Chief Executive, Queensland Health that they have sufficient knowledge and experience in the use of laser apparatus for hair removal. Verification of use from a colleague or a statement detailing the applicant's work history relevant to the use of laser apparatus may be acceptable.

Applicants who obtain this type of licence will have a condition attached to their licence stating that during all stages of treatment involving the use of laser apparatus on another person for hair removal, the licensee must observe the advice of a knowledgeable medical practitioner in relation to avoiding any possible adverse health outcomes for the other person, as a result of the treatment.

Alternative Three

Persons who satisfy this alternative may be issued a trainee laser operator licence. To be eligible for this type of licence, applicants must:

- provide evidence that they have satisfactorily completed a laser safety course, specifically approved by the Director, Radiation Health Unit for the training of persons seeking a licence to use laser apparatus for hair removal, within 12 months of the application being submitted.

Applicants who obtain a trainee laser operator licence will have a condition attached to their licence which requires the licensee to use laser apparatus for hair removal only in the presence of, and under the supervision of, a person who holds an unrestricted licence to use laser apparatus for hair removal.

Another condition attached to trainee laser operator licences will state that, during all stages of treatment involving the use of laser apparatus on another person for hair removal, the licensee must observe the advice of a knowledgeable medical practitioner in relation to avoiding any possible adverse health outcomes for the other person as a result of the treatment.

Prior to renewing their licence, trainee licence holders should seek certification from a person who holds an unrestricted licence, stating that the applicant is competent in using laser apparatus for hair removal. If the Chief Executive, Queensland Health is satisfied with the certification, the trainee status will be removed from the licence.

Approved laser safety courses

A list of approved laser safety courses suitable for persons seeking to obtain a use licence for hair removal is available on request from the Radiation Health Unit.

Persons who have completed a course which has not been approved should submit full details of the course for consideration by the Radiation Health Unit.

Procedure for application

An application for a licence to use laser apparatus must be made to the Chief Executive, Queensland Health through the licensing officer, Radiation Health Unit. Application forms are available from the Radiation Health Unit by phoning (07) 3406 8000, or from Radiation Health's website: www.health.qld.gov.au/radiationhealth.

Licences granted remain current for the term specified on the licence and are subject to all conditions in the legislation and any additional conditions attached to the licence. Applications for renewal of licences must be made prior to the expiry of the current licence.

Enquiries

For further information, please contact an officer at Radiation Health on (07) 3406 8000 or, alternatively, via email at radiation_health@health.qld.gov.au.