

Advice before attending your laser or electrolysis appointment

Information for service users

This leaflet provides essential information for service users who have been referred for Laser or Electrolysis treatment for male pattern hair growth by the Gender Identity Clinic.

Once referred to the Laser Service, you will be asked to attend one of three Medical Photography sites at St John's Hospital, Lauriston Building, or the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh.

Whilst it can be emotive to grow hair for some service users, this is required to allow assessment of the distribution, length, colour and thickness of the hair. Medical photography of the hair-bearing areas allows the multi-disciplinary team to assess the most appropriate treatment.

Treatment for unwanted hair growth comes in two forms: Laser or Electrolysis.

Any form of laser hair removal is **not** a permanent hair removal solution. Laser hair removal stunts the hair growth.

Maintenance sessions are required to be self-funded following the course of NHS treatment otherwise it will result in continued hair growth.

What is Laser Treatment?

Laser treatment uses focused light to treat dark hair growth. This is a non-invasive procedure that targets hair follicles and inhibits future growth.

What is electrolysis?

Electrolysis works by inserting a small electrical current, through a small sterile probe into the opening of the hair follicle. When the hair follicle is attached to the root and enough heat is created, the root will be damaged inhibiting future growth.

You might feel a sensation similar to having an elastic band snapped against your skin. This might be slightly painful and certainly not pleasurable, especially as the treatment continues, but it is not unbearable.

Preparing for hair removal sessions

Before a full treatment is carried out, a test will be performed on a small area of skin.

Please allow at least 4 days of hair growth in the treatment area before your appointment. If there is insufficient hair growth this may affect your appointment and can affect the effectiveness of treatment.

This finds out how your skin responds to the laser/electrolysis so treatment settings can be optimised before the start of treatment.

Please ensure that the area/s of skin to be treated are clean and free of lotions, makeup, deodorant or any other products.

NHS Funding

If approved for hair removal funded by the NHS, you will receive funding for an initial test patch and consultation, your hair removal sessions, and a post-treatment review.

You will be funded for one set of Laser Hair Removal or Electrolysis **only** (this is in line with the National Gender Identity Clinical Network Scotland – Facial Hair Removal for Transgender Patients Guidelines). No additional sessions will be funded by NHS Lothian. Requirement for additional sessions/maintenance can be discussed with service provider with a view to self-funding.

This funding allocation is final and non-transferable.

Important Information:

NHS Lothian are charged a fee for late cancellations/no shows, this will count as part of your allocation.

By way of this leaflet, you are agreeing to attend your appointments with the understanding that should you not attend, this will likely affect your treatment outcome and no further treatment will be offered. If you cannot attend your appointment, you must contact the clinic.

This is not a permanent solution. Once the course has finished further sessions of maintenance are required to optimise results. This requires self funding.