



# Client Newsletter

Newsletter Issue 4 February 2009

## **Introduction:**

January and February always seem to me to be gloomy months. The excitement and preparation for Christmas has long since passed but the winter seems only to have begun. Personally I believe all of those animals who hibernate have got it right and I long for humans to catch up evolutionary speaking. Imagine eat, drink and be merry all summer; snuggle down all fat, content and cosy for the winter and wake up refreshed and thin in the spring. Sounds perfect to me.

In the meantime we hope you will enjoy reading our news with a cup of coffee and a nice cream cake.

## **New Regulator for Laser/IPL Clinics**

The use of laser and intense pulse light equipment falls under the area of service provision known as Private and Voluntary Healthcare as do private doctors and hospitals. This area of healthcare has, since the implementation of the Care Standards Act 2000, been regulated by The Healthcare Commission. With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 the Healthcare Commission will merge with the Commission for Social Care Inspection and the Mental Health Act Commission to form The Care Quality Commission (CQC). The aim is to create one independent regulator for health, mental health and adult social care in England.

The primary aim of the Care Quality Commission is to put the people who use services first and ensure providers deliver high quality health and social care that supports people to live healthy and independent lives, empowers individuals, families and carers in making informed decisions about their own care and is responsive to individual needs.



This vision is in line with that of the Healthcare Commission. The ethos of the standards and quality assurance framework against which all registered providers are assessed will remain focused on the provision of client focused safe, quality assured treatment and care. Cristianos are proud of their achievements, having been assessed by the Healthcare Commission as not only meeting but exceeding the current standards and as a result our clients will probably notice little difference to the working of our clinics.

The Government had considered plans to withdraw laser and IPL from the regulatory framework however these plans have been withdrawn. The Care Quality Commission will have more regulatory powers than previous regulators including an increased fine of up to £50,000 for failure to register. We hope this will help to increase standards within the industry.

The new Commission have as yet been unable to supply registered providers with the new Care Quality Commission logo therefore we will continue to display details of the Healthcare Commission until we receive further instructed from the Care Quality Commission.

### **Primary Care Trust (PCT) Help with Treatment Costs for Hair Removal**

Our regular clients will know we at Cristianos strive for excellence in all that we do and as such continue to break new ground wherever and whenever we can. Time and again we hear of clients having approached their GP asking for help with unwanted hair growth only to be met with negativity or dismissed with apathy. Always focused on the needs of our clients we developed a GP information pack to assist clients in such circumstances.

The availability of hair removal on the NHS varies from one Trust to another and is generally regarded as a cosmetic treatment. Some Trusts will have electrolysis clinics attached to their dermatology departments but generally speaking the waiting lists are extensive and the amount of treatment is restricted regardless of the severity of the patient's condition. The availability of light based technology i.e. laser or intense pulsed light IPL within this framework is even more rare. Nevertheless where individual cases are presented certain Trusts are willing to out-source such treatment. Cristianos Laser Clinic Ltd. has built a reputation for the high standards of treatment and care and for the support offered to its clients. That same quality of client centred treatment and care has resulted in Cristianos being assessed by several Primary Care Trusts as being suitable for providing contracted services for hair removal. The NHS have a duty to ensure that treatments patients receive are safe, effective and performed by suitably qualified practitioners.

Healthcare organisations are required to monitor the quality of treatment they provide and produce audited data which demonstrates the safety and effectiveness of treatment. Healthcare Professionals are obliged by their professional Codes of Conduct to abide by Clinical Guidelines and can be struck off the register if they fail to do so. Hair removal either electrolysis or light based has traditionally fallen within the field of beauty therapy where although professionally qualified there are no mechanisms in place to withdraw qualifications for bad practice and no requirements to prove the safety or effectiveness of treatment. Therefore the NHS has in the past been reluctant to out-source treatments of this nature.

However the Care Standards Act 2000 (as amended) made it a criminal offence to operate a laser or intense pulse light system without prior registration with the Healthcare Commission. Registration requires the provider to demonstrate their compliance with a quality assurance framework known as the National Minimum Standards (NMS). Registration can be suspended or withdrawn where breaches in the NMS are found. The legal requirement to register and comply therefore gives the NHS a tool with which they can gauge the safety and effectiveness of any clinic and a mechanism by which they can report bad practice and as such many more Trusts are willing to contract such services.

If your unwanted hair is the result of a medical problem or is affecting your quality of life your PCT may pay for you to have treatment at Cristianos. If you think you would benefit ask your therapist for advice.

## **Clinic News**

### ***Altrincham***

It's now been just over a year since Sue Howells resigned from her reception post after 10 years with Cristianos. It was decided that Sue's departure should herald a new approach and her replacement Louise also takes a clinical role within the clinic. Elaine also left Cristianos and was replaced by Jane Waight. Both Louise and Jane have Nursing backgrounds and are qualified beauty therapists. The girls have joint responsibility for reception and conducting treatment. We hope this approach gives an extra dimension for clients and prospective clients making telephone contact with the clinic.

### ***Bury***

There are no changes at Bury. Kerry runs a tight ship as we all know and the clinic continues to go from strength to strength.

### ***Leeds***

Leeds has also had a staffing change. Emma Feeney's recent engagement meant she needed to be employed on a fulltime basis in order to get on the property ladder. We wish her well both in her new employment and her forthcoming marriage.

Lucy Holden joined us in September 2008 and is a qualified beauty therapist who is also currently studying for a Foundation Degree in Advanced Clinical Practice.

### ***London***

Our oldest member of staff, Peggy Stratton has decided due to a health issue to take a short break from conducting treatment. However, still wanting to keep in touch both on a clinical and personal level with the clients, Peggy often calls in to assist Sharon on a Thursday. We have insisted she remains on the Christmas present list and look forward to her return later in the year. Her dry wit is always welcome.

## **Healthcare Commission Annual Reports**

The Healthcare Commission have in the past been obliged to conduct an inspection on each registered clinic on an annual basis. These inspections were an arduous process during which we were required to demonstrate our compliance with every single standard within the National Minimum Standards (NMS) framework at every clinic. The burden of inspection clearly proved too much for all concerned and the Commission changed to risk based assessment on an annual basis with one compulsory site inspection at least every five years.

The risk based system can be conducted online by the provider completing risk assessment forms and including evidence to support their statements. The Commission will choose certain areas of the NMS to focus their enquiries on each year for example Client Information where they will look in depth at the information a provider supplies to clients, prospective clients and for public consumption. Although simpler than the original inspections the process is still time intensive. The Commissions assessments managers will then look at the information supplied and use it to identify any areas of risk. Where risk is identified this will automatically trigger a full inspection. Where no risk is identified the Commission will issue a **Regulatory Assessment Statement** which highlights the areas of the NMS which have been examined and the findings.

All of our clinics where identified as being free from risk and Regulatory Assessment Statements appear on the Healthcare Commissions website. Altrincham clinic was due for a five year site inspection. The subsequent report was glowing as we were once again found to meet all standards. Sadly the Commission have removed the "exceed standard" category we are so proud to receive on a regular basis as they thought it was open to personal opinion of the individual inspector. Again this report is available on the Commission website. Unfortunately the Commissions site does not have the capacity to show previous reports where any changes for example of address have taken place. Therefore you will find no previous reports for London or Leeds. We are proud of our Healthcare Commission reports and publish them on our website at the individual clinics and are also pleased to send you a copy on request.

### **Chris's Bit**

I hope this newsletter finds you all healthy and not effected too much by present economic climate. It's a concerning time for all and battening down the hatches is important for everyone. We are always keen to provide the kind of service that responds to the needs of our clients. Whilst some treatments can be classed as cosmetic many of the treatments we provide are fundamental to the client's health, wellbeing and quality of life. We hope that as many clients as possible will be able to benefit from our work to gain PCT funding for clients. We will also respond positively by running a series of discounted offers during the year, so watch out for offers on our comprehensive website.

***One's prime is elusive. You little girls, when you grow up, must be on the alert to recognise your prime at whatever time of your life it may occur.  
Muriel Spark 1918***

### **Your Contributions**

Your contributions are important, if you would like to make any comments or have your news put in our Newsletter please contact us by:

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