

# Guide to standards and hygiene for acupuncture, tattooing, semi-permanent skin-colouring, cosmetic piercing and electrolysis

This information is intended to provide guidance to proprietors and operators on the general standards that be necessary for the purpose of complying with relevant legislation, including the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The guide is drawn from the model bye-laws prepared by the Department of Health. In some circumstances precautions etc additional to the following may be required for the protection of health or safety.

**1.0** In this guide, unless the context otherwise requires—

‘The Act’ means the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982.

‘client’ means any person undergoing treatment.

‘hygienic piercing instrument’ means an instrument such that any part of the instrument that touches a client is made for use in respect of a single client, is sterile, disposable and is fitted with piercing jewellery supplied in packaging that indicates the part of the body for which it is intended, and that is designed to pierce either—

- a) the lobe or upper flat cartilage of the ear, or
- b) either side of the nose in the mid-crease area above the nostril.

‘operator’ means any person giving treatment, including a proprietor.

‘premises’ means any premises registered under sections 14(2) or 15(2) of the Act.

‘proprietor’ means any person registered under sections 14(1) or 15(1) of the Act.

‘treatment’ means any operation in effecting acupuncture, tattooing, semi-permanent skin-colouring, cosmetic piercing or electrolysis.

‘the treatment area’ means any part of premises where treatment is given to clients.

**2.0** For the purpose of securing the cleanliness of premises and fittings in such premises a proprietor shall ensure that—

- a) any internal wall, door, window, partition, floor, floor covering or ceiling is kept clean and in such good repair as to enable it to be cleaned effectively;
- b) any waste material, or other litter arising from treatment is handled and disposed of in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance as advised by the local authority;
- c) any needle used in treatment is single-use and disposable, as far as is practicable, or otherwise is sterilized for each treatment, is suitably stored after treatment and is disposed of in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance as advised by the local authority;
- d) any furniture or fitting in premises is kept clean and in such good repair as to enable it to be cleaned effectively;
- e) any table, couch or seat used by a client in the treatment area which may become contaminated with blood or other body fluids, and any surface on which a needle, instrument or equipment is placed immediately prior to treatment has a smooth impervious surface which is disinfected—
  - i) immediately after use; and
  - ii) at the end of each working day.
- f) any table, couch, or other item of furniture used in treatment is covered by a disposable paper sheet which is changed for each client;
- g) no eating, drinking, or smoking is permitted in the treatment area and a notice or notices reading “No Smoking”, and “No Eating or Drinking” is prominently displayed there.

**2.1** a) Subject to sub-paragraph (b), where premises are registered under section 14(2) (acupuncture) or 15(2) (tattooing, semi-permanent skin-colouring, cosmetic piercing and electrolysis) of the 1982 Act, a proprietor shall ensure that treatment is given in a treatment area used solely for giving treatment;

b) Sub-paragraph (a) shall not apply if the only treatment to be given in such premises is ear-piercing or nose-piercing using a hygienic piercing instrument.

**2.2** a) Subject to sub-paragraph (b), where premises are registered under section 15(2) (tattooing, semi-permanent skin-colouring and cosmetic piercing) of the 1982 Act, a proprietor shall ensure that the floor of the treatment area is provided with a smooth impervious surface;

b) Sub-paragraph (a) shall not apply if the only treatment to be given in such premises is ear-piercing or nose-piercing using a hygienic piercing instrument.

**3.0** For the purpose of securing the cleansing and so far as is appropriate, the sterilization of needles, instruments, jewellery, materials and equipment used in connection with treatment—

a) an operator shall ensure that—

i) any gown, wrap or other protective clothing, paper or other covering, towel, cloth or other such article used in treatment—

aa) is clean and in good repair and, so far as is appropriate, is sterile;

bb) has not previously been used in connection with another client unless it consists of a material which can be and has been adequately cleansed and, so far as is appropriate, sterilized.

- ii) any needle, metal instrument, or other instrument or equipment used in treatment or for handling such needle, instrument or equipment and any part of a hygienic piercing instrument that touches a client is sterile;
  - iii) any jewellery used for cosmetic piercing by means of a hygienic piercing instrument is sterile;
  - iv) any dye used for tattooing or semi-permanent skin-colouring is sterile and inert;
  - v) any container used to hold dye for tattooing or semi-permanent skin-colouring is either disposed of at the end of each treatment or is cleaned and sterilized before re-use.
- b) a proprietor shall provide—
- i) adequate facilities and equipment for—
    - aa) cleansing; and
    - bb) sterilization, unless only pre-sterilized items are used.
  - ii) sufficient and safe gas points and electrical socket outlets;
  - iii) an adequate and constant supply of clean hot and cold water on the premises;
  - iv) clean and suitable storage which enables contamination of the articles, needles, instruments and equipment mentioned in paragraphs 3.0a) to be avoided as far as possible.

**4.0** For the purpose of securing the cleanliness of operators, a proprietor—

- a) shall ensure that an operator—
  - i) keeps his hands and nails clean and his nails short;
  - ii) keeps any open lesion on an exposed part of the body effectively covered by an impermeable dressing;
  - iii) wears disposable examination gloves that have not previously been used with another client, unless giving acupuncture otherwise than in the circumstances described in paragraph 4.2;
  - iv) wears a gown, wrap or protective clothing that is clean and washable, or alternatively a disposable covering that has not previously been used in connection with another client;
  - v) does not smoke or consume food or drink in the treatment area; and
- b) shall provide—
  - i) suitable and sufficient washing facilities appropriately located for the sole use of operators, including an adequate and constant supply of clean hot and cold water, soap or detergent; and
  - ii) suitable and sufficient sanitary accommodation for operators.

**4.1** Where an operator carries out treatment using only a hygienic piercing instrument and a proprietor provides either a hand hygienic gel or liquid cleaner, the washing facilities that the proprietor provides need not be for the sole use of the operator.

**4.2** Where an operator gives acupuncture a proprietor shall ensure that the operator wears disposable examination gloves that have not previously been used with another client if—

- a) the client is bleeding or has an open lesion on an exposed part of his body; or
- b) the client is known to be infected with a blood-borne virus; or
- c) the operator has an open lesion on his hand; or
- d) the operator is handling items that may be contaminated with blood or other body fluids.

**5.0** A person registered in accordance with sections 14 (acupuncture) or 15 (tattooing, semi-permanent skin-colouring, cosmetic piercing and electrolysis) of the Act who visits people at their request to give them treatment should observe the requirements relating to an operator in paragraphs 3.0a) and 4.0a).

#### **ADDITIONAL**

- A. Proprietors shall take all reasonable steps to ensure compliance with this guidance by persons working on the premises. A copy of this guide and a copy of the certificate of registration issued under Part VIII of the Act shall be prominently displayed on the premises.
- B. Nothing in this guidance shall extend to the practice of acupuncture by or under the supervision of a person who is registered as a medical practitioner or a dentist or to premises on which the practice of acupuncture is carried on by or under the supervision of such a person.
- C. Inspectors of Leeds City Council have the power to enter premises, to require improvements to be made, to prohibit certain activities where there is a risk to health and to prosecute for breaches of the law. Penalties include fines and/or imprisonment.