COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

BOARD OF REGISTRATION IN MEDICINE

COMMITTEE ON ACUPUNCTURE

POLICY 2024-01

LASER HAIR REMOVAL

February 15, 2024

The scope of practice for an acupuncturist is set forth in 243 CMR 5.01(2) in the definition of “the practice of acupuncture.” It states that an acupuncturist may practice “laser acupuncture” but the acupuncture statutes, regulations and policies do not define that term. A licensee asked the Committee on Acupuncture if a licensed acupuncturist may practice laser hair removal from their acupuncture office.

A licensed acupuncturist may not practice laser hair removal unless he/she is also a licensed electrologist as defined in M.G.L. c. 112, § 87T or is a licensed physician. Laser hair removal is not within the scope of practice of an acupuncturist in Massachusetts.

In 2015, the Massachusetts Legislature created a statutory scheme in which hair removal using a laser would be practiced only by licensed electrologists and physicians. *See* M.G.L. c. 112, § 87T – 87KK and Acts of 2014, c. 236. “No person shall engage in the practice of electrolysis or hold oneself out as a practitioner of or being able to practice electrolysis unless that person is duly licensed by the board [of Cosmetology and Barbering] or is a qualified physician licensed under the laws of the commonwealth.” M.G.L. c. 112, § 87II.

In Massachusetts, electrolysis is defined as including “laser electrolysis” and laser electrolysis is defined as including laser hair removal. Laser Hair Removal is defined in the Board of Electrology’s[[1]](#footnote-1) Policy 2015-01, “Laser Hair Removal.” In Policy 2015-1, Section A(1)(g), the board states “Laser Hair Removal means using Laser Light before May 4, 2015 to perform hair removal or reduction.” In Section A(1)(h), the board states that “Laser Electrolysis means Electrolysis performed with Laser Light.”

The Board of Cosmetology and Barbering regulates the education and training of electrologists.[[2]](#footnote-2) It also licenses the locations where electrolysis, including laser electrolysis, can be performed and prescribes the instruments and equipment that can be used. M.G.L. c. 112, § 87V. These locations are subject to sanitary regulations and inspections by the board. In addition, the owner of a licensed shop cannot hire a person to perform laser electrolysis on the premises. “unless the individual is licensed pursuant to sections 87T to 87JJ, inclusive.” M.G.L. c. 112, § 87AA.

Therefore, the owner of an acupuncture practice should not allow laser hair removal to be performed on the premises unless the laser hair removal is performed by a licensed electrologist or a physician and the location is also licensed by the Board of Cosmetology and Barbering.

1. The Board of Electrology is now the Board of Registration in Cosmetology and Barbering. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See <https://www.electrologyma.com/electrology-in-mass>. Massachusetts Association of Electrologists. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)