

## Laser/IPL Safety Awareness

The 'Core of Knowledge' is intended for all staff using laser (class 3 and 4) and non-laser (IPL and LED) light sources in a range of applications, including medical, surgical, dental and aesthetic practices. Other staff present during laser or IPL use (e.g. nursing staff, Theatre Assistants, trainees) should have a basic understanding of the risks they may face and how they can be prevented. The aim of Basic Laser/IPL Safety Training is to provide those staff groups with an understanding of the key principles of laser/IPL safety. It is essential that the training is supplemented by additional training in specific applications. Although exact content may differ slightly, the following syllabus is considered to be the minimum course content that may be covered by training centres. Course duration should be at least 1 hour.

After attending the course, each participant should have a basic understanding of the following:

- Laser safety management including the role of the Laser Protection Adviser, Laser Protection Supervisor, Local Rules, Controlled Area, Hazard Distance
- Emission characteristics of laser and IPL equipment
- Penetration of light of different wavelengths through skin and eye
- Dangers of central versus peripheral retinal damage
- Hazards to eye and skin from accidental exposure
- Risks associated with accidental reflections
- Personal protection measures including eye protection
- Hazards to the patient, e.g. endotracheal tube ignition
- Incidental hazards, including electrical, fire, explosion and plume emission
- How to deal with an adverse event or accidental exposure

Course organisers should issue an attendance certificate and keep a record of attendees for a minimum of 5 years.

It is good practice for individuals to re-attend Basic Laser/IPL Safety Training courses every 5 years, or sooner following an extended absence or if there have been significant changes to equipment or practices affecting the individual

It is recommended that the course should be approved by a recognised body such as the British Medical Laser Association.

It is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that adequate measures, including training, are in place to ensure safe use of lasers and IPL devices.