

5. Physical therapies

Under the current Health Act (1958) the following practices do not require registration with local government. The information provided relates to general hygiene in minimising the risk and the spread of potentially harmful microorganisms that may lead to infection. Adoption of the outlined information is encouraged.

5.1 Massage

In performing various massage therapies, the operator needs to assess all possible infection risks and to consult their professional organisation. See the following sections for appropriate procedures to reduce the potential for the transmission of infection:

- hands—see part A, section 3.3
- surfaces—see part A, section 4.2.2
- linen—see part A, section 2.3.5
- oils/creams—see part A, section 2.5.

5.2 Solaria

Guidelines for the installation, maintenance and operation of solaria are outlined in AS/NZS 2635:2002 Solaria for cosmetic purposes. The standard seeks to increase the levels of safety associated with the use of solaria. The Department of Human Services recommends compliance. The following are key requirements of the standard.

5.2.1 Age limit

It is recommended that an operator does not allow an individual under the age of 18 years to use a sun-tanning unit without parental or guardian consent. Any individual under the age of 15 years is strictly not permitted.

5.2.2 Warning notices

Commercial premises should place one or more notices (of A4-size paper) presenting the following information (in legible print) within the immediate view of every client entering the premises and in each sun-tanning unit cubicle.

- Exposure to ultraviolet radiation from a sun-tanning unit contributes to the skin-ageing process and may cause skin cancer.
- People with fair skin and who are unable to tan should not use a sun-tanning unit.
- Intentional exposure to sunlight or a sun-tanning unit should be avoided for 48 hours after sun-tanning exposure.
- Protective goggles should be worn at all times while undergoing sun-tanning unit exposure.
- Age restrictions as discussed above.

5.2.3 Client consent form

Prior to the commencement of tanning sessions, the solarium operator should hand a consent form (appendix A of AS/NZS 2635:2002) to the client. This consent form advises clients of the first four points under part B, section 5.2.2 and also of risks of certain medical conditions and medications.

The solarium operator should ensure the following practices.

- The client signs and dates the form.
- The client returns the signed and dated form before the commencement of the first tanning session in the premises.
- The original signed and dated form is filed in the records of the premises for a period of not less than two years.
- A copy of the signed and dated form is handed to the client.

5.2.4 Measurements

The standard recommends that measurement of ultraviolet radiation levels of solaria occur immediately after the commissioning or replacement of any item of sun-tanning equipment that is not to the original manufacturer's specification. It is therefore important to use only items of equipment (including lamps) that comply with the manufacturer's specifications.

5.2.5 Maximum exposure times

The standard has technical exposure limits based on various skin types. These ensure no individual suffers erythema (skin reddening) as a result of ultraviolet exposure in a solarium.

5.2.6 Maximum repeat exposure

Repeat exposures should not be undertaken sooner than 48 hours after the previous exposure.

5.2.7 Promotion

Claims of noncosmetic health benefits should not be made in the promotion of sun-tanning unit use.

5.2.8 Skin type exclusion

Individuals with skin type 1 (fair skin that always burns, never tans and is often accompanied by red hair and freckles) should not be allowed to use a sun-tanning unit.

5.2.9 Hygiene

Any part of a surface of a sun-tanning unit that is subject to body contact, including protective goggles, should be either cleaned and disinfected or, if disposable, completely replaced after the solarium unit has been used by any individual (see part A, section 4.2.2).

5.2.10 Supervision

In commercial premises, all sun-tanning unit use by any client of the premises should be subject to supervision by a trained operator at all times.

5.2.11 Solarium operator training

Any individual who is supervising the operation of a solarium or sun-tanning unit should be properly trained in the following:

- requirements of the standard and their practical implementation
- the proper determination of skin types and exposure times
- the proper screening for potential exposure limiting conditions
- emergency procedures in case of overexposure to ultraviolet light
- the types and wavelength of ultraviolet light
- proper procedures for cleaning and disinfecting protective eyewear and tanning equipment.

5.2.12 Unstaffed, coin-operated premises

Unsupervised, self-service solariums do not meet the standard and therefore are not recommended for use.

5.3 Saunas

The main infection risk relates to the surfaces of the sauna. Operators should ensure surfaces are kept clean. Only nonabrasive cleaners should be used (see part A, section 4.2.2). Clients should be encouraged to use a clean towel for sitting or lying on while using the sauna. If the operator provides towels, they should be handled accordingly once used (see part A, section 2.3.5).

5.4 Flotation tanks

The main infection risk for flotation tanks is the salt water that is reused between clients. Operators should ensure both internal and external surfaces are kept clean, using nonabrasive cleaners to remove scum and to prevent corrosion caused by splashing of the highly concentrated salt water (see part A, section 4.2.2). Regular maintenance should include checking the filters.

When applying oils or creams to protect the skin from the concentrated salt water, appropriate dispensing procedures should be used (see part A, section 2.5).

5.5 Spas and pools

Pools and spas are required to comply with the Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001, part 7 (public spa pools and public swimming pools).

5.6 Gymnasium equipment

Daily cleaning of the gymnasium environment and its equipment is important to prevent the spread of infection and provide a safe environment for users and staff. Additional cleaning is required immediately when and where any person has sweated profusely.

Bacteria such as *Staphylococcus aureus* (golden staph) can cause conjunctivitis and skin infections when transferred from inadequately cleaned equipment and reusable towels. The spread of infection is assisted by the reuse of a single towel for cleaning and by the use of the gymnasium user's own towel to wipe down equipment. Supplied reusable towels should be used only once and placed in a receptacle for laundering (see part A, section 2.3.5).

The following cleaning equipment should be readily available for gymnasium users or staff:

- a solution of warm water and detergent in a pour bottle
- paper towels for cleaning and drying equipment

There should be a receptacle for the disposal of used paper towels. Facilities should be available for users and staff to wash their hands after cleaning or wiping down equipment (see part A, sections 2.3.1).

5.7 Alternative therapies

There is an abundance of alternative therapies, including naturopathy, aromatherapy, homeopathy and ear candling. It is important for the operator to consider all possible infection risks and, if possible, consult their professional organisation. If those therapies consist of procedures that penetrate the skin then premises must be registered and guidelines for skin penetration (part B, section 2) should be followed. See the following sections for appropriate procedures to reduce the potential for infection transmission:

- hands—see part A, section 3.3
- surfaces—see part A, section 4.2.2
- linen—see part A, section 2.3.5
- oils/creams—see part A, section 2.5.

