

“Laser-based therapy is helping me bring back old-school medicine.”

—**JOYCE IMAHIYEROBO-IP, MD**
Vibrant Dermatology

Joyce Imahiyerobo-Ip, MD, Dermatologist and Owner of Vibrant Dermatology in Dedham, MA, seeks to restyle ‘old-school’ medicine. At her newly established practice, the modern world of dermatology rules supreme. She’s focusing on taking more time to understand each patient’s needs and is offering the latest services to deliver the highest levels of care. After implementing the Neo Elite as the device-based foundation of her dermatology practice, she’s been able to build a leading skin health haven for the ever-changing needs of her medical and aesthetic patient community.



PRACTICE AT A GLANCE

- Vibrant Dermatology Opened May 2018
- 1 Dermatologist and 4 extenders
- Patient population 50% Caucasian 50% Skin of Color
- Favorite laser treatments: Acne, PIH, Rosacea, Inflammatory Diseases
- Special laser interest: Rosacea in Skin Type V & VI
- 7-month Revenues from Neo Elite: \$200K



DERMATOLOGISTS ARE HELD TO A HIGHER STANDARD

“As dermatologists, I think now more than ever before, it’s our responsibility and focus on being the best,” says Dr. Ip, “To be on top of everything that’s cutting edge to get our patients the results they demand. It’s what makes my practice unique and what draws people to me. I’m offering the modalities to get results no matter the issue. We’re increasingly held to a higher standard. You can’t just offer run-of-the-mill or outdated therapies anymore. It’s imperative to stay ahead of the curve.”

“This is the definition and expectation patients have for modern healthcare and their physicians. One of the primary driving factors influencing these standards and expectations is a technology and patient access to it. Technology is ingrained in today’s culture as a way to better life experiences. Alexa is there to makes your life simpler. Siri is there to help make ordinary tasks easy. Patients now demand from their healthcare and skincare physicians. New data reveals that 50% of patients want technology to treat their medical condition. Not only are 70% of healthcare professionals seeing patient experiences as a major business priority, but those who are addressing it are realizing greater financial returns and retention rates.”

IT'S EASY TO BECOME JADED BY LIGHT AND ENERGY-BASED DEVICES

"With my first job out of residency in 2013, we would rent a pulsed-dye laser, an alexandrite laser, a fractionated laser, and an IPL. Every time we did that, we had to coordinate a laser day and keep in mind of the many different safety precautions. What ended up happening is me becoming dissatisfied with the results, especially for rosacea. I felt I would promise them an improvement in three treatments with the pulsed-dye laser, and a lot of people really weren't seeing the improvement they needed.

"So, during this time, I started to get a little jaded about lasers and felt they overpromised and underdelivered. Plus, you needed to have so many of them to have a comprehensive laser practice that it almost felt like I would never be profitable doing it as a solo physician. Because of all this, for the last three years

"In 2018, I started thinking about opening my private practice. It was time for me to be creative, try new things, and offer new treatments and products important to me. And with this risk, I took another look into technology with a similar set of jaded beliefs of lasers being overall too expensive, not delivering results, and leaving patients disappointed. It wasn't until a friend of mine introduced me to the Neo Elite I said, 'Maybe things have changed.' It amazed me how much laser technology had been improved and how a single device could deliver results for so many indications. But, could it be true? I still had my guard up. All device reps are in it to sell units, but my peers, the reviews, and the clinical results were so well aligned with my desires in opening a practice. *I took a leap of faith to see if it met all my needs—and it has.*"



INSIGHTS

MY LASER DERMATOLOGY PRACTICE

"My goal was to be able to offer as many services as possible for the top conditions I knew my patients would be seeking. The most common things we use lasers for are reds and browns – veins, hyperpigmentation, photodamage, and the like – but I was really enticed by some of the medical indications like psoriasis and inflammatory skin diseases. I think it was comforting for me to start with one laser, to feel like, 'Okay, this is what I have. I'm going to learn this front and back. I'm going to try to work it for every single thing I can to offer a comprehensive set of applications for my patients."

"I've always been curious about the impact of laser light on acne. It's helped allow me to revisit my acne patients regularly and patients appreciate the follow-up. They appreciate someone isn't just sending them off with a bunch of medicines and saying, 'We'll see you in three to six months, good luck!'"

"This isn't to say I solely rely on the laser as the solution for my medical dermatology patients. It's one of the ways I have been able to position myself to attract my clientele. I still take insurance. I still rely on prescriptions as medical therapies. Many times, a patient is coming in and asking about the laser specifically like 'I heard that you're the doc that does laser for acne. I want to try that because I've tried everything else.' Sometimes patients will even say, 'Hey, you didn't recommend laser for me. Why not?' Most people who come to me because of my reputation have already tried a lot of other things. They've been to other practices that have not cleared their skin, and they're frustrated. At this point, they're willing to put their care in my hands because I offer the tools that will clear them.

VIBRANT
DERMATOLOGY

skinbar^{MD}
BY VIBRANT DERMATOLOGY

"One of the most ironic things about being a doctor with so much experience with lasers is I've often been unable to get treatments on myself as a person of color. I can't get treated by alexandrite. Long-pulsed Nd:YAG is excruciating for laser hair removal I'd rather shave. Plus, I wouldn't dare use a laser on my face for photorejuvenation. I learned on all of these devices yet wasn't able to use them on myself as a person of color, but now I can with the Neo Elite."

"One area I've been able to impact people's lives significantly is people of color with rosacea. I was at a loss of how to treat people of color with rosacea other than topical medications. The Neo Elite has been a game-changer for this."

INCLUSIVITY AND ITS IMPACT

"Part of my branding is that we're a colorblind practice. My practice is 50/50 in terms of minority vs. non-minority, including Asian, Hispanic, Black, Caucasian, and Middle-eastern skin. It's important to recognize this allows doctors to treat skin of color safely. Treating these skin types with laser is not something I think most people get to develop. If you're not familiar with or their skin or routinely have to turn this patient population away, how do you develop the comfort and confidence? For people to be at ease using this is a laser and deliver effectively safe results is a great step forward."

"There are so many bi-racial or bi-ethnic people in every population. It's naive not to think about the whole market share. These people are looking for specialists who are with their skin. Regardless of race or ethnicity, we need to be comfortable



treating and have options for treating skin of all types. It's understandable for physicians who treat skin of color patients to be concerned about the risk of complications in addressing melasma, acne, and PIH and other common skin concerns in the skin types. Physicians and our patients of color have been educated that risks outweigh the benefits of laser treatment—this is now outdated with the Neo Elite. It's something Aerolase's technology, it's marketing focus, and education has been a pioneer for."

REVAMPING THE BETTER DAYS OF MEDICINE

"I'm bringing back what I call the old school medicine. I intentionally want to see fewer patients. I intentionally want to take more time with each patient. I take a consultative approach to address the whole patient, which means a full aesthetic and medical view. I spend about 20-minutes with each patient to give us enough time to address the whole patient. I brand my space as a one-stop-shop for everything for your skin, hair, and nails, and laser technology is a major component to my ability to be clinically and financially successful."

"When a patient puts their skin, hair, and nails into my hands, I'm making a deal to accomplish their goals. I think this is an area patients talk about that has given healthcare and, more specifically, dermatology a bad rep. You come into the office, you wait, you're seen, you're sliced and diced, and at the end of the visit, you have no idea what happened to you. These are the patient concerns and views of medicine I'm trying to assuage by creating a different look and feel for my patients. "

"Those frustrated patients that have come to me in the first place? I'm the one who tells them, 'I don't know how long it's going to take, but I know I'm going to get you clear.' Because I have the right laser, the right products, and the services to do it. They're the ones who post their before and after pics on Instagram tagging Vibrant Dermatology, feeling themselves, and saying 'I love my skin.'"

SUPPLEMENTAL PIECE "MY BRAZEN BLUEPRINT FOR OPENING A NEW PRACTICE"

If you are going to try to open a practice and feel you need to purchase all those multiple devices, you will spend a lot of money. I don't know that all of us have that money to spend. I certainly was very aware of my budget and not trying to bust my budget by buying multiple devices. I needed more flexibility, which the Neo Elite gave me.

Even if you've trained on a pulsed-dye laser or an IPL where there are a gazillion IPLs, there's a gazillion of KTP, there's a gazillion diodes. With each one, you have to learn new settings; you have to learn something new each time you get a device. It's not just

like, "Oh, the settings that I learned in residency are in my laser binder, which I'm looking at in my bookshelf right now, are going to apply to the device that I have now." The simplicity of the Neo Elite brings you is an excellent safeguard.

It's a great laser for physicians who need a workhorse to treat core medical applications. So you can have just one laser for a multitude of conditions, and safe and effective in all skin types from lightest to darkest. The Neo Elite's clinical indications for patients with all skin types include acne, rosacea, melasma, PIH, psoriasis, photorejuvenation, skin rejuvenation and tightening, solar lentigines and/or redness. If I were starting a new practice out of residency and wanted to build a diverse practice, the Neo Elite is the one I would pick since I'm proof of my success.

My biggest concern in starting a new practice was not going into too much debt and figuring out how to recruit new patients. Having your own patients requires you to deliver your best results because those results matter more than ever. Delivering results means retaining those patients and determines your success or failure. Because of my results and inclusiveness, I'm getting no less than 30% of new patients from word of mouth. Skin of color patients will increasingly become the majority. Having one laser to address all aesthetic and medical concerns in this population will provide a dramatic and rapid return on your investment.

The laser is the most common procedure I do from a cash-based perspective. In our practice, I earned more than \$200,000 with the Neo Elite from May to December of 2019. I'm doing it every day, multiple times a day, and if not, my aesthetician is using it because of its safe and intuitive design.