



British Association of Cosmetic Nurses

### **What is Aesthetic Medicine?**

Also known as, 'Cosmetic Medicine' or 'Appearance Medicine' or 'Anti-Aging Medicine'.

Aesthetic medicine is a developing clinical speciality distinct from plastic surgery, providing minimally invasive medical treatments to enhance patients' satisfaction with their physical appearance.

The procedures are elective and performed on adult patients who are healthy.

### **Indications for cosmetic medical treatment;**

Treatments usually focus on face, neck, hands and décolleté

Aging or sun-damaged skin

Lines and wrinkles

Loss of youthful facial contours

Scarring, acne scarring, stretch marks

Uneven pigmentation

Open pores

Broken capillaries

Cosmetic medicine is not just for the aging patient, it can be used to enhance facial features, such as lips, nose, cheeks, chin and jawline and also to protect, maintain and enhance younger skin.

Cosmetic nurses may also undertake treatments for indications on the body;

Unwanted hair/hair loss

Unwanted fat

Unightly leg veins

Excessive sweating (hyperhidrosis)

**Treatments provided by cosmetic nurses include the following (the list is not exhaustive);**

1. Dermal fillers
2. Botulinum toxins
3. Medical needling
4. Chemical peels
5. Cosmeceutical and prescription skin care
6. Laser, Intense Pulsed Light, radiofrequency and ultra sound
7. Carboxytherapy
8. Medical microdermabrasion
9. Mesotherapy
10. Sclerotherapy

### **A career in cosmetic medicine**

Cosmetic medicine for nurses can be extremely satisfying and rewarding. As a new venture you will be learning many new skills which will take time and practice to become proficient. You will also utilise to the full many of the nursing skills you have already developed.

However there are a number of things to consider before embarking on this different career path:

### **Training**

Currently training usually consists of a 1 day course for each treatment offered. Prices vary but on average you can expect to pay £700 per day. None of these courses benefit from accreditation and we recommend thoroughly researching all available courses. These courses usually (and should) only offer certificates of attendance, rather than proficiency, since it is not possible to become proficient within a day. Some nurses find that these courses are a good introduction, from which they can develop with further support. Others find 1 day insufficient for their needs.

In the near future the universities will be offering courses at a post basic degree level, in line with Department of Health and professional association recommendations. These accredited courses will be better placed to ensure the proficiency of trainees, and should be considered.

## Prescribing

Many of the treatments we perform require the use of prescription only medicines (e.g. Botox®) or their use in managing complications. If you are a non-prescriber we recommend as best practice (and to ensure you remain within NMC guidelines) that you work under the guidance of a prescriber and that prescriber has experience in the treatments you wish to offer.

- The NMC require that all patients receiving a POM, including Botox®, receive a face to face consultation with the prescriber

If you wish to undertake the prescribing course (V300) then we would recommend it. Many universities provide this course and it is worth contacting your local university. Many universities will accept placements from privately funded (non NHS) nurses. Please note however that there will be an expectation of the following:

- That you have been practicing for a minimum of 1 year in the area you wish to prescribe.
- You will have arranged a Designated Medical Practitioner (typically a doctor) prior to the course.

If you are already a nurse independent prescriber, the NMC allow you justify your decision to prescribe. We cannot therefore advise on this, although a 1 day training course would not be considered suitable justification.

If you decide to proceed with training you will have many more questions. Also, like many cosmetic practitioners, you will be aware of a sense of isolation and lack of the support you may be used to. The BACN not only aims to maintain high standards, it provides the peer support necessary to all nurses in cosmetic medicine. Amongst much else, this is achieved through:

- Regional, CPD accredited meetings
- An annual national conference
- On-line resources including the invaluable closed BACN Facebook page
- Best practice guidelines

The BACN wish you every luck and the reassurance of knowing that we are here to support you.

## Information for nurses wishing to enter this speciality

The BACN recommends nurses have a minimum of 3 years post registration experience in a healthcare setting prior to considering a career in aesthetic medicine. Over 80% of our members have had over 10 years' experience in The NHS.

### Training

The BACN cannot recommend particular trainers as we are not in a position to credential the quality of training provided by individual companies. There are a multitude of training providers which can be found with a Google search. Be advised, there is no regulation of training in aesthetics and no standards set.

We recommend you seek training that;

- ☑ Guarantees small numbers with high trainer to pupil ratio.
- ☑ Experienced trainers; ask if the trainer has their own full time practice, how long have they been practicing and check their websites and biographies.
- ☑ Ask how many treatments you will be able to undertake under supervision.
- ☑ Ask what support is given after training and at what cost if any.
- ☑ Ask how the theory is covered and what written material you will have to take away, to support your study.
- ☑ Do not undertake training unless you have patients to treat following training. If you have no means to practice following training, your investment in time and money will be wasted.
- ☑ Do not undertake training for prescription only medicines such as Botulinum toxin or Sclerotherapy unless you are a prescriber or work with a prescriber. Administering prescription only medicines without prescription is illegal. The prescriber must undertake a face to face consultation with the patient. Working with a prescriber has additional costs and is not practical if you do not have a client base to justify attendance.

It is likely that more formal and structured academic training will be available and required in the not too distant future. The BACN is working to develop such training and education, in response to recognised short falls and common complaints.

### Work Opportunities

This is a very competitive field. It is estimated there are some 4000 nurses trained in aesthetics, many will have undertaken training and failed to succeed in gaining either patients to treat or employment. The leading insurer estimates there are approximately 1000 nurses insured to practice.

59% of our members work part time in aesthetics, almost 52% cite it as their sole source of income and 47% have their own clinic. 86% are self-employed.

Employers are increasingly seeking nurses with both experience in aesthetics and qualified as nurse independent prescribers.

Aesthetic nursing affords a variety of work models which implies flexibility; however, those who have succeeded in this field will have invested a great deal of time and money and worked very hard to do so. It is likely you will begin your journey establishing your own client base, which will require determination and drive and will begin with good business planning. Your bank will be able to provide useful business planning tools which will help you develop a plan and a vision. Like any business, you will require finance, how much will depend upon your plan. It is likely you will spend more than you make initially, this may explain, in part, why many remain in The NHS part time, to pay the bills.

*'I love my job as an Aesthetic Nurse. It's very satisfying and rewarding work.*

*The result, even a small change, can increase the confidence of a client, making them feel wonderful. Art and Science.'*

*'I do enjoy seeing patients revelling in the results!! However have found myself isolated at times as I work in aesthetics on a very part time basis'*

*I enjoy the extended role, the harder I work the better I am rewarded financially. I am almost autonomous in my practice'.*

*'I have become passionate about nursing again!'*

*'Clients are far and few. It's very competitive. It's isolating working alone without having the support of a knowledgeable person who's been doing this for a long time.'*

*'Far more complex than I ever imagined'*

*'Lack of support/not accessible/expensive'*

### **How much can I expect to earn?**

This will depend upon a number of factors. Salaries for employed nurses range from £27,000 p.a. to £50,000 p.a. Depending on location, who they work for and their experience. Self-employed nurses can earn much more, or much less..... Depending on location, business model, overheads and how many patients they treat.

### **Resources for further information**

[www.consultingroom.com](http://www.consultingroom.com)

### **Journals and publications**

Journal of Aesthetic Nursing [www.aestheticnursing.co.uk](http://www.aestheticnursing.co.uk)

Cosmetic News Magazine [www.cosmeticnewsuk.com](http://www.cosmeticnewsuk.com)

Body Language [www.bodylanguage.net](http://www.bodylanguage.net)

Prime Magazine [www.prime-journal.com](http://www.prime-journal.com)

## Events

There are a number of conferences and exhibitions throughout the year which are advertised in the journals and on-line.

BACN Business Skills Workshop, London 10th March 2014

BACN Conference and Exhibition, London, October, 2014

## Considerations when starting your Aesthetic Career

When entering the world of aesthetics you will be stepping out of the NHS and into the competitive world of private practice. You will not have the level of guidance and support you may have relied upon in the NHS, this will be your business and your responsibility. Below, we have outlined and sign posted considerations and key points to help you on your way.

- Will you work for yourself or an employer? Working by yourself can be difficult if you are new to the industry and have no experience - competition is high.
- Decide if you will be part time or full time.
- Compile a business plan – your bank will provide you with a tool kit to help you with this (see page 2)
- Make an appointment with your accountant; decide if you will be Sole Trader, Limited Company or Partnership, your accountant can advise you on this. (see page 2)
- Make an appointment with your bank - it is not necessary to stay with your personal bank - take your business plan and discuss your options, this will also develop a good business relationship
- Decide on a name and where you will be based. (see page 6)
- You will need professional indemnity Insurance and public liability.
- Download the Competencies Document: An Integrated Career and Competency Framework for Nurses in Aesthetic Medicine. There is also a self-assessment tool which can be downloaded which works in conjunction with the competencies. These have been mapped against the Knowledge for Skills Framework and the whole document is available on the [RCN website](#).
- The Aesthetics Nurses have produced a publication 'Aesthetic Nursing: a good practice guide' which is also available on the RCN website.
- Do not undertake training until you have done the above and have an idea of your client base.
- JOIN THE BACN!

The [BACN website](#) also has a wealth of information.

## SETTING UP YOUR BUSINESS

When an idea 'hits' we feel excitement and slight exhilaration. We will usually talk to friends and relatives who will give mixed advice; usually they are excited for us but also feel concerned. Quite often the look of the clinic is thought about before the hard facts of finance and profitability are considered. It will be a dream realised but in the initial excitement we can forget to take a business look at the project we are about to launch.

You should have a clear idea of the kind of business/service you want to provide and how you will deliver this service. You may be dealing with a customer chain, all potential purchasers and users of your services are your customers and you will need to research and understand the needs of all the groups.

### Business Plan:

A business plan is good starting point; you will be able to see for yourself how this business will work for you. It certainly focuses the mind and gives a clear idea if it is workable. Your plan should not only lay out your business idea, but explain how you plan to attract customers to your business, as well as what your contingency plans are if and when things go 'off track' or unforeseen circumstances arise. This one document will help you throughout your business life and should not only be regularly referred back to but should also be amended and updated as your goals change.

In a clear and precise manner, present your reasons why the person looking at the business plan should take notice of it. You should always tell the truth, be factual and try not to make unattainable goals. Do try to make it sound as exciting as you are feeling because your belief in the potential of the business has to rub off on them.

Your business plan is forward thinking about:

- initial outlay/ set up costs
- projected profits
- projected expenses
- staffing costs
- overhead costs
- contingency plans.

If this feels daunting to you there are many websites to help and advice, such as: [www.BusinessLink.gov.uk](http://www.BusinessLink.gov.uk) .

### Type of Business:

The two most commonly used by small businesses in the UK are sole traders and limited companies.

### Sole Trader:

To operate as a sole trader you are essentially self-employed. Your business income will be counted alongside any existing personal income you may have, which makes the accounting side of your business as simple and straight forward as it can be. This is usually the choice of many new businesses and, when you are trying to build your business the last thing you really want to worry about is a

complicated accounting and administrative arrangements. Getting behind on your accounting is best avoided! Keep it as simple as possible.

If at any time you want to make changes to your business, the sole trader path offers much less paperwork, it also gives you complete control over your own accounting. But this will take up some of your time, so factor this into your working life.

The serious downside is that, should your new business run into financial trouble, you alone are responsible for sorting it out. People you owe money to can claim on your personal assets - this could be your home. Another point to consider is, as a sole trader you may be restricted in certain ways, the terms of the name you can choose for your business.

### **Limited Company:**

If the last paragraph made you nervous, you may choose the limited company option. "Limited" means that the company's finances are separate from your own personal money, unlike the sole trader option. If everything goes wrong, your personal assets are protected, you will only lose the money you have put into the business. However, as the director of a limited company, you may be required to act as a guarantor for loans or credit granted for your company.

To get money out of your business, you must become an employee of the company and be paid either with a salary, or by taking the profits out at the end of the year, as a kind of dividend. Many people starting businesses prefer to become a limited company. It does look more professional and has a lot less personal risk if you need to invest a great deal of money on equipment or take on expensive premises.

### **Partnership:**

The Partnership structure offers another option, for those who want to go into business with other people, but without any of the legal tangles of the limited company. Unlike a limited company, a partnership has no legal standing but is just an uncomplicated way of linking two or more people together in a business venture.

### **LLP:**

Lastly, it is worth mentioning a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP). This is similar to the above, but there will be less liability for each of the partners if the business generates any debt. There will be more administrative work, similar to being a limited company but is usually preferred by solicitors and accountants.

As always, you are best advised to talk through the options with an accountant or business advisor.

## Accounts:

Decide if you need a full accountant or a bookkeeper. Ideally, a good accountant should save you more money than they cost. However, this depends partly on finding a good accountant and using them in the correct way. The following points are some of the things you should avoid, as they could turn out to be expensive:

- Don't get an accountant to do all your day to day bookkeeping, a good bookkeeper will be cheaper.
- Don't turn up at the end of the year with a big shoe-box of hundreds of dog-eared bits of paper, they are likely to make some semblance of order from this but not only will it be expensive but, likely to be inaccurate.
- Don't get the accountant to produce your business plan for you - it is important that you own and understand your business plan.
- Don't speak to them when things are too late; seek their advice and knowledge at the start-up process, enabling you to ask what legal form your business should take, when should you pick up your tax year and what types of expenses you should claim etc.

If you do not have a good accountant, ask others with successful business.

## Finance:

Once your business plan is complete and you are happy with the outcome you will need to consider if you can finance this business yourself or if you will require help. There are various organisations that have been formed to help new business ventures and these can be a good way to kick start your business. The Business Link website ([www.businesslink.org](http://www.businesslink.org)) will allow you to put in your post code and find out what the grant offers are in your area.

There could also be a time scale for this, as you can imagine, they tend to go very quickly and it does work on a first come, first served basis, but don't be put off, if you miss this years grants you can apply for the following year when hopefully you would like to push your company forward. Banks are very helpful and it is important that you develop a working relationship with your bank representative, they are there to help and advise and can sometimes offer deals for starting up your business, it is always good to speak to them.....

Whatever kind of business you go for, be it a limited company, partnership or a sole trader option, you **must** have a separate designated business account. It's a legal requirement for limited companies but is highly recommended for sole traders (to keep personal and business financial activities separate).

We suggest you also open a [business deposit account](#). You can put cash aside for tax and VAT payments, this will save any nasty shocks at the end of the year and possibly avoid having to borrow money to pay your tax demand. The benefits are you will earn a far better rate of interest than if your money is sitting in your current account.

You may have a long-standing trusted relationship with a particular bank as a personal customer, but it doesn't necessarily follow that they will also be the best bank for you as a business client. Shop around, look on the internet, and make sure you compare several business accounts before deciding.

Find out how much it will cost you to have an account with a particular bank. If you have a regular monthly transaction to process, you'll want to know how much this will cost to carry out. Find out if any banks are offering any incentives for business starters. It is usually best to look at what is offered in the long run, not the initial incentives to pull you in - there is no point having cheap banking for 3 months and then being saddled with large banking charges thereafter.

Some banks offer free banking for life, but the support offered is minimal (this can mean you can only deal with machines so beware!). Others do charge monthly fees, but you need to weigh up your needs against the cost of these fees.

Interest earned on client's money is a real sore point between banks and their clientele. It's quite common that you either get free transactions or a good rate of interest; it never appears to be both. So it's up to you to decide which you'd prefer. Most start-ups will benefit more from lower charges in the first few years of operation when they don't have a lot of surplus money. You always have the option to switch banks later, although this is yet another thing to do later when perhaps, and hopefully you are becoming busier.

Many new business owners find themselves doing financial activities in the evenings or at weekends. So ask yourself, will I be able to get full access to statements and accounts no matter what the time or day? A good online banking system can save you a lot of time and when you're setting up a business, time is very precious to you.

### **Insurance:**

Insurance is one of the most important things for you to put in place. There are specialist insurance companies for Aesthetics and you will find out more on the BACN websites. You need to have public indemnity insurance. It's better to talk to your preferred insurers about your requirements and costs.

### **Treatments:**

The treatments on offer at your clinic are dependent on your training and interest you have, but you may have to consider investing in further training to open up the client base. If you are working with prescription only drugs, unless you are a nurse prescriber, you will need the services of a doctor or independent nurse prescriber to prescribe for you. The cost of this is varied and should be budgeted into the cost of the treatment.

**Be Aware:** To use Toxins /prescription drugs you will need to research how you will administer these treatments: You will either need a prescribing nurse or a doctor ([see NMC](#)) to take the consultation appointment and then prescribe for the client. Or you will need to be an Independent Nurse Prescriber. This level of training can happen when you have been practicing in aesthetics for at least a year – it will take around 6 months and will cost around £1500. This is extra cost but it is the option recommended by the BACN.

## **Charges:**

It is important that you look very carefully at the charges for your services/products. You must not undervalue your skills and knowledge but of course you must be competitive. You will need to factor in the rent, phone line, service charges, further training costs and 'your time' into the amount you charge. Areas throughout the country differ in the amount a clinic can charge so you need to do some research to get an idea of what is acceptable.

Research your competition – what they offer, how much they charge etc.

## **Name:**

When starting up a new business, one of the first things you need to do is choose a suitable name for your enterprise. It is worth spending time considering the name, since not only will this be the first thing potential customers see, but it will also be with you for the duration of your business life. It is very important that you get this right. People fall into all sorts of traps, trying to combine two names or using a name that probably means something to you but in the business world would not mean anything. It should be simple (it never seems to work if you try to be too clever) you also need to look at alphabetical placing in directories (so, Xylophone is out!). You may want to make sure there is no other company with your chosen name. You will save yourself a lot of stress and costs further down the line if you research both simultaneously.

## **Clinic Address:**

You will need to think about where your clinic will be. Will it be in your home or will you rent? A room in your home will be cheaper but it should have a separate entrance - your clients will not want to see the daily workings of your home life or visit the left over smell of the chilli from last night's supper!

If it is going to be rented accommodation then you will need to budget this into your business plan. Unless you organise the appointments with space between each appointment, you may need a waiting area or a separate room to speak to clients regarding their treatments so that other people waiting cannot hear. You need to consider the accessibility of the clinic and whether it has parking.

## **Fitting Out the Clinic:**

The cost of fitting out your clinic is something you will need to consider very carefully. The initial cost is dependent on what treatments you are going to offer. Whatever you offer you will need to have a clinic that has a warm, welcoming and clean atmosphere so you may have to decorate the premises. You will need seating and a couch, good lighting and privacy for your clients. You are going to need a phone and reception area with storage of client details and products.

When you are starting your business it is very tempting to look at others in the marketplace and emulate them. In a way, it is the logical thing to do. After all, if one company has succeeded in that way, then surely you will? But in all probability, you are unlikely to – by emulating others you are telling the marketplace that you are nothing special just an "I'm here too" business that does not stand alone but gets its ideas from others. This image is well known, because it is just a stand in line

business and tends to have to survive only by competing on price... and you now know what a risky game that is.

### **Full Time or Part Time:**

You need to make a decision: are you going to work this new venture full time, or part time, running alongside other work. If it feels safer to keep a job elsewhere to start with, you will need to consider that you will be paying for a room for 7 days a week. Also, when you are not in the clinic, who will be answering the telephone enquiries? It is important that there is a 'human' contact to take the enquiry and perhaps answer any queries. We all know how frustrating it is to call and get an answer phone and if this happens too often then the temptation for the client will be to go somewhere else. You are building a new business and will not be able to afford to lose any potential clients! A good small investment to consider is an answering service. There are many telephone answering services at hand, some of them specialising in medical calls. The charges vary and some do offer a pay as you go service. They should be confident in your area of expertise and also be able to book your client appointments. It is good to research and talk to others regarding the services offered. If possible go to the premises and listen to their answering capabilities, they should not refuse!

### **Advertising/PR:**

Advertising/PR is a powerful weapon. It separates your business from the pack, demonstrates your expertise and promotes your products and services to a much larger audience than you might otherwise reach. Any promotion could be considered as informing, persuading or reminding clients about the services being offered.

*The questions to ask are:*

- Who is the target audience?
- What is the message you are trying to get across and how will you do this?
- What are the advertising or marketing options available that give you value for money.

Small companies can do their own PR by writing articles for the local papers and magazines (even the freebies).

*Prioritise:*

Focus on the media that matters; that means the media that your potential customers read, look at online or listen to. Plan an advertising strategy and budget for this. Ensure you choose publications that your target clients will read; on the whole, national papers in your business will be generally a waste of time. Look at local press, business magazines, trade or e-zines (email newsletter) and websites. If you don't know what your customers look at, ask them, find out how they found you, find out what is working for you. A record of their comments is very useful in the future of your business.

*Editorials:*

You get the benefit of 'editorial approval' thrown in, and unlike advertising, the exposure is free. If you can promote your clinic with free advertising then all the better. It will raise your profile and your credibility.

- *Prepare Your Basic Stories:*

The most common way of trying to get a story in the media is through the news (or press) release. Aim to put out one story every couple of months - enough for your name to be recognised and logged into peoples' minds, but not enough for people to become bored. As the name suggests, a news release talks about something new that is happening. It could be:

- A launch of a product or service
- Your Company development
- Expansion
- Winning of an award
- Successful raising of funds for a charity
- Case study with an interesting news hook
- Presence at an exhibition

Remember that the editor always has their reader/audience in mind. So you have got to package your story to have maximum audience appeal. The article needs to be interesting to the reader and has something in it for them. Try to include something that may be amusing but not frivolous (you need to be seen as a serious company).

- **Become Controversial – Show Your Authority:**

Think about the things your customers (who are also the local paper/magazine's readers and the station's listeners etc) care about and that you can legitimately have an opinion on, what can you ride on the back of? What's a current topic? If you cannot think of anything then:

- **Create News:**

- Host an event
- Run regular poll questions on your website
- Write a guide
- Sponsor something relevant
- Deliver a talk/lecture
- Make a prediction for the future in Aesthetics

- **Tell Your Story:**

If you're a business owner, send your media the story of how you have got to where you are, sharing both the highs and lows - you never know, they may just be interested, it's worth a try!

- **Keep Media Onside:**

Once you have built regular contact with your media contacts, look after them.

## Use the Web:

Your media material has a huge role to play in improving your search engine optimisation and the Web will equally help you build your profile too. So consider the following:

- Build hyperlinks into your releases that go back to the relevant page of **your** website (always direct them back to your website); this will drive web traffic and improve your page rank. The more your site is visited the higher the profile on the search engines.
- Set up Google news alerts for your area of expertise. You will then immediately see when the media is reporting on something that you can use the information to comment in your favoured media, or add to your site.
- Wherever possible link your news/features back to things on your website where people can get more, downloads, expert advice but remember to **data capture** all the downloaders. Your data base will be very valuable as you build your clinic.
- Host your news on your site, but not before you send it to the media! It will reach more people.....

## Leaflets/Flyers:

Leaflets are very important way to communicate your services. These can be expensive to produce, but they are your identity. You have to consider a logo and design that represents both you and your clinic. It is very easy to try to save money and design them yourself, but this can be dangerous. Unless you have design background they can look cheap and unprofessional. Make sure the stationary is high in quality and looks professionally designed and printed. This is quite often the first impression your clients will have of your business and this impression usually last a long time. It is worth taking a look at the free site [www.VistaPrint.co.uk](http://www.VistaPrint.co.uk).

Once you have established your clinic identity, if the free sites are not what you have in mind then get quotes from two or three printers and be careful to only order what you think you will need to start. You will have a better idea of quantity when it comes to re-ordering. You may also want to update the stationary with other details as you grow, you do not want hundreds of copies of outdated literature on your shelves.

## Further Training:

An important thing to consider is your ongoing training. It is essential in your new business working life that you keep up to date with your CPD points and are abreast of new developments in the continually changing Aesthetic world.

## Useful Sources of Information:

*Government Support:*

The Business Links

There are 45 business Links operating across England. The business Link Website is where you can find advice about government funding, grants, legislation and starting a business: [www.businesslink.org](http://www.businesslink.org)

*Scottish Enterprise:*

In Scotland, a similar service is provided through a network of Local enterprise companies. The Business Gateway is a single access point to range of integrated services for businesses in Scotland is: [www.bgateway.com](http://www.bgateway.com)

*Other Links:*

The Small Business Service: [www.sbs.gov.uk](http://www.sbs.gov.uk)

British Association of Women Entrepreneurs: [www.bawe-uk.org](http://www.bawe-uk.org)

Federation of Small Businesses: [www.fsb.org.uk](http://www.fsb.org.uk)

British Chamber of Commerce: [www.chamberonline.co.uk](http://www.chamberonline.co.uk)

**GOOD LUCK!**