



Statement from BACN Chair on Joint Council for Cosmetic Practitioners (JCCP)

My conflict as a nurse and what I believe should be happening in the UK in Cosmetic Practice, and where the BACN sits with regard to the Joint Council for Cosmetic Practice, has made this a very challenging time for me personally.

We are seeing an influx of non-medical practitioners, beauty therapists etc., pouring out of the woodwork to quickly grasp the opportunity our Government has openly given them to carry out these procedures, albeit disregarding the fine print regarding supervision and educational levels.

I still struggle to understand how the Government allowed tax revenues to outweigh public safety by agreeing that those without medical training could practice. Objecting stakeholders, such as the BACN, were simply asked to 'prove it', and this was coupled with the lack of an across-the-board and agreed set of aesthetic practice standards to judge against. However, the need to pull together all of the disparate evidence on adverse reactions and complications was an alarm call to us all.

I fear greatly for public safety and I, and the BACN, are committed to working with and supporting those who are collecting the data to "prove it" as the government has demanded, and campaigning for statutory and mandatory regulation for the sector. However, the medical professional associations have never managed to come together in the past, though it was often a discussion topic - a conflict of interest perhaps, coupled with lack of common goals? It is important to note that the sheer possibility of a Joint Council has brought all of the Associations together around the table.

To a lay-person, it would seem very obvious to have one unified body of professional associations in cosmetic practice working together towards a common goal, offering a degree of protection to the patient seeking a cosmetic treatment.

I have been practicing as a cosmetic nurse for 30 years, having learnt "on the hoof" with no opportunity of a qualification or certification/accreditation in what I was doing until now. When I started out, and until as recently as only 7 years ago, cosmetic nurses were considered mavericks and we had no support from our own regulator. Cosmetic nurses of the time, challenged the authorities (NMC, RCN) to recognise the specialism of Cosmetic Nursing and to give us the support we needed. They lobbied RCN successfully for a Cosmetic Forum and developed the first set of accredited RCN Cosmetic Competencies, which BACN have continued with and are updating again.

RCN eventually dissolved the forum, leaving a small core group of the RCN cosmetic committee no option but to initiate an Association to bring cosmetic nurses together, to educate and support each other. We had been left in the wilderness to work in solitude across the country without a network of colleagues and with no guidance or support in place. Exactly what NMC does not want from their registrants. It seems a huge step from those early days to what is now the BACN – the leading professional association in the industry.

Nurses were, and still are often, considered the handmaidens to the doctors and less qualified to deliver cosmetic treatments, even though it had been the nurses delivering the training and the majority of treatments. I undertook the V300 prescribing qualification and I'm now on the Northumbria MSc in Cosmetic Interventions. Even though I can easily evidence my competence as per NMC requirements, I want to be formally qualified, because I now can be. Fortunately for nurses, UK legislation allows us to legally practice autonomously in any area we are deemed competent.

BACN has come a long way since its inception, changing with the times and needs of its members. It has grown more than any other cosmetic medical association and is exceptionally strong, a leading figurehead, respected and influential. Our nurses are respected leaders and represent us on many committees. We champion for safe practice and I'm proud of our members, who are as eager and passionate about their work and the association as I am, keen to learn more, to undertake training, develop skills and be formally recognised as a qualified and professional cosmetic nurse. Our more experienced members have embraced and supported our newer members as they begin their journey in Cosmetic Practice, offering mentorship and a kindly guiding hand. How things have changed from when I started, when my peers knew little more than I did.

Now there is a focus on creating a common set of agreed standards and putting guidance and limitations in place, we have to ask ourselves - do we want to be part of this and do we need to be?

Although I have supported the concept of the coming together of the Associations in standardising cosmetic practice and bringing the industry specialists together, I have always been challenged and frustrated in the knowledge that the non-regulated professions would be part of it. I have voiced this consistently throughout and although we can definitely still shape the building blocks, processes and controls being put in place, we are unable to alter the fact, as that will only happen if there is a change in Government policy.

All the professional cosmetic and medical associations around the JCCP table are doing their utmost to put robust limitations in place. They see the benefits of the core principles and like us are prioritising in protecting their own member's interests and future. There is still room for change and an opportunity to shape the future of it with further JCCP stakeholder meetings taking place, the next one being in April. This meeting is open to all. The JCCP will also not finalise its structure and scope of activities until it goes formally live in November 2017.

BACN are asking members for response, and this is available to members through the members area and BACN correspondence.

As Chair of the BACN I also commit to coming back to you all as the JCCP develops to set out the detailed proposals of its operation and to review whether the BACN will continue to engage or not.



Sharon Bennett - Chair BACN

Statement from BACN Vice Chair on Joint Council for Cosmetic Practitioners (JCCP)

If there is one FACT, it is that, whether we like it or not, the shape of our industry is changing. We have obligations we must justify as the BACN and as professionals both through our actions and our inactions. To do nothing is an important decision that must not be taken lightly. So far we have felt it important to have a voice in how our industry is shaped. We have promised to survey members as that shape becomes clearer, and we will do so. However, we must assume that without the BACN involvement, the JCCP will continue (there is considerable support amongst other professionals). We will then be leaving it to others to shape our industry – doctors, surgeons, dentists, pharmacists and non-BACN nurses.

A register with voluntary regulation was a recommendation from the Keogh report – it was always going to happen. It was always going to happen in some ways we might not like, but on behalf of the BACN I, as did many others, fought for the opportunity to at least influence it.

The JCCP has support from all the statutory regulators, including the NMC, all the major manufacturers, pharmacies and insurers. As I say, we will be giving our members a voice in the final decision but we must ask ourselves – do we just want a voice in making this decision or do we want a voice in determining the future of our industry?

Andrew Rankin - Vice Chair BACN