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## **Medical Aesthetics Certificate: Understanding the safe use of botulinum toxin in cosmetic procedures**

**April 2021**

**This is an RSPH-regulated Qualification**

### **Description**

This qualification covers the specialist knowledge required to perform cosmetic treatments with botulinum toxin. Candidates, who must be qualified healthcare professionals, will have a foundation of knowledge and understanding that can be applied to aesthetic practice and will comply with the standards required by their statutory bodies.

All botulinum toxins are prescription only medicines and can only be prescribed by doctors, dentists and by nurses and pharmacists with the prescribing qualification, following a face-to-face assessment and consultation with the qualified prescriber. The qualification will underpin the theoretical knowledge required of these professionals to consult, prescribe and administer treatments with botulinum toxin and manage any of the associated complications and adverse reactions to the treatments.

The objective of this qualification is to ensure that suitably qualified individuals have the required knowledge and understanding to be able to perform botulinum toxin cosmetic procedures safely and to the standard as set out in *Competency standard – Provide chemical denervation treatment with botulinum toxin*. This standard is produced by the Qualification Council for Cosmetic Procedures.

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## Summary of Learning Outcomes:

To achieve this unit a candidate must:

1. **Understand the properties, uses, preparation and application of botulinum toxin type A in cosmetic procedures; *with reference to:***
  - 1.1 The biochemical and pharmacological properties of botulinum toxin
  - 1.2 The medical and cosmetic uses of botulinum toxin
  - 1.3 How botulinum toxin is prepared for use
  - 1.4 How botulinum toxin is administered in cosmetic procedures
  
2. **Know how to assess patients presenting for cosmetic procedures with botulinum toxin; *with reference to:***
  - 2.1 The requirements for patient consultation and consent
  - 2.2 Factors involved in assessing the suitability of patients for botulinum toxin treatment
  
3. **Understand the importance of human anatomy in relation to botulinum toxin treatments and the management of complications; *with reference to:***
  - 3.1 The origin, insertion, innervation and function of the muscles of the face and neck
  - 3.2 Vessels and nerves which are located close to toxin injection sites
  - 3.3 Possible complications that can arise as a result of treatment and how to manage these
  
4. **Understand legislative and ethical requirements relevant to the treatment of patients with botulinum toxin; *with reference to:***
  - 4.1 The legislation that applies to botulinum toxin treatments
  - 4.2 Ethical issues for the treatment of patients with botulinum toxin

## Content:

### **1 Understand the properties, uses, preparation and application of botulinum toxin type A in cosmetic procedures**

- 1.1 *Biochemical and pharmacological properties of botulinum toxin:* Neurotoxin produced by *Clostridium botulinum*; composition and biochemical structure of Type A toxin; pharmacological mechanism of action; pharmacokinetics of botulinum toxin and its effect on longevity, side effects and drug interactions; variations in properties between different licensed brands.
- 1.2 *Medical and cosmetic uses of botulinum toxin:* Use in medical conditions such as migraine and excessive sweating; use in cosmetic procedures such as smoothing the appearance of worry lines and 'crow's feet', improving the jaw line and appearance of the neck, prevention of teeth grinding; how the effect of botulinum toxin on muscles produces these results.
- 1.3 *How botulinum toxin is prepared for use:* Protocols for reconstitution of toxin; use of diluents; storage and shelf life of un-reconstituted and reconstituted toxin; manufacturers' guidelines for storage and reconstitution of toxin.
- 1.4 *How botulinum toxin is administered in cosmetic procedures:* Importance of licensed prescribers; licensed doses for different cosmetic indications; method of administration, depth and sites of injection for different indications; preparation of injection sites; infection control, disposal of toxin, sharps and clinical waste.

### **2 Know how to assess patients presenting for cosmetic procedures with botulinum toxin**

- 2.1 *Requirements for patient consultation and consent:* Explanation of product used, procedures for treatment, risks and side-effects, alternative treatment options, pre and post treatment care and advice; management of patient expectations; identification and processing of material information; identification of financial or other barriers to treatment; obtaining consent for treatment.
- 2.2 *Factors involved in assessing the suitability of patients for botulinum toxin treatment:* Conduct of assessment; medical and social history; psychological risk factors; pathophysiological basis of medical and surgical cautions and contraindications; psychosocial factors that may affect compliance with pre and post-treatment advice; possible interactions with other medication; features of ageing; indications for treatment; risk, benefit and assessment analysis; development of appropriate treatment plans.

### **3 Understand the importance of human anatomy in relation to botulinum toxin treatments and the management of complications**

3.1 *Origin, insertion, innervation and function of the muscles of the face and neck:* To include procerus, corrugator supercilii, frontalis, orbicularis oculi, depressor anguli oris, nasalis, orbicularis oris, platysmal bands, masseter, mentalis, risorius, zygomaticus major, mullers muscle, inferior tarsal muscles, levator labii and superioris alaeque.

3.2 *Vessels and nerves which are located close to toxin injection site:* Identification of vessels close to toxin injection sites; risk of injury to these vessels during treatment; effect of injury during treatment.

3.3 *Possible complications that can arise as a result of treatment and how to manage these:* Diagnosis and management of complications to include brow ptosis, lid ptosis, asymmetry of muscle action, ocular complications, malar oedema; mechanism of resistance; factors that increase risk; strategies for avoiding unintended effects on muscles and tissues that are not targeted for treatment; MHRA reporting pathways for adverse events.

### **4 Understand legislative and ethical requirements relevant to the treatment of patients with botulinum toxin**

4.1 *Legislation that applies to botulinum toxin treatments:* Legislation to include the Medicines Act 1968 and its application to the sale, supply, prescribing and administration of botulinum toxin, General Data Protection Regulations 2018, Mental Capacity Act 2015 and its impact on consent; legislation relating to the supply of botulinum toxin and the advertising of prescription-only medicine; legislation relating to the storage and retention of medical notes; principles of consent as established in case law and its practical application to informed consent; different kinds of consent and their importance.

4.2 *Ethical issues for the treatment of patients with botulinum toxin:* Scope and responsibilities of non-medical prescribing to include any variation according to profession; the CAP code and functions of the ASA; professional practitioner – patient confidentiality; regulators and authorities that support and enforce professional standards; effect of religion and culture on consent and treatment planning; complaints management; statutory duty to be open and honest in the event of something going wrong.

## **Assessment:**

The knowledge and understanding of the candidates will be assessed by written examinations provided by the Qualification Council for Cosmetic Procedures (QCCP).

A candidate who is able to satisfy the learning outcomes and obtain a **PASS** grade must achieve a score of at least 75% in each of the four sections of the examination.

In order to obtain a **DISTINCTION** grade, candidates must achieve the criteria for a **PASS**, and additionally achieve an overall score of at least 90% in the examination.

Candidates wishing to take the assessment should contact QCCP for details of the assessment process.

Candidates must be registered with RSPH and have a valid RSPH candidate number before they can access the assessment.

## **Guidance:**

Candidates must be practising medical doctors and dentists or nurses and pharmacists who hold a relevant prescribing qualification.

## **Special Assessment Needs:**

Centres that have candidates with special assessment needs should consult The Society's Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy which is available on the RSPH web-site ([www.rsph.org.uk](http://www.rsph.org.uk)).

## **Recommended Qualifications and Experience of Tutors:**

Tutors should hold a regulated Level 7 qualification in clinical aesthetics, MSc or Post Graduate Teaching qualification or equivalent or have obtained the Medical Aesthetics Certificate: Understanding the safe use of botulinum toxin in cosmetic procedures.

Additionally tutors must provide evidence of 5-years post-registration experience and a minimum of 5 years active practice in the field of Aesthetics. They should not be subject to pending or on-going professional disciplinary or fitness to practice hearings and must hold valid medical indemnity insurance.

### Other Information:

RSPH retains the right to periodically publish statistical information for centres offering this qualification relating to achievement rates.

All RSPH specifications are subject to review. Any changes to the assessment or learning outcomes will be notified to Centres in advance of their introduction. To check the currency of this version of the specification, please contact the Qualifications Department.

Centres must be registered with RSPH.

Any enquiries about this qualification should be made to:

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