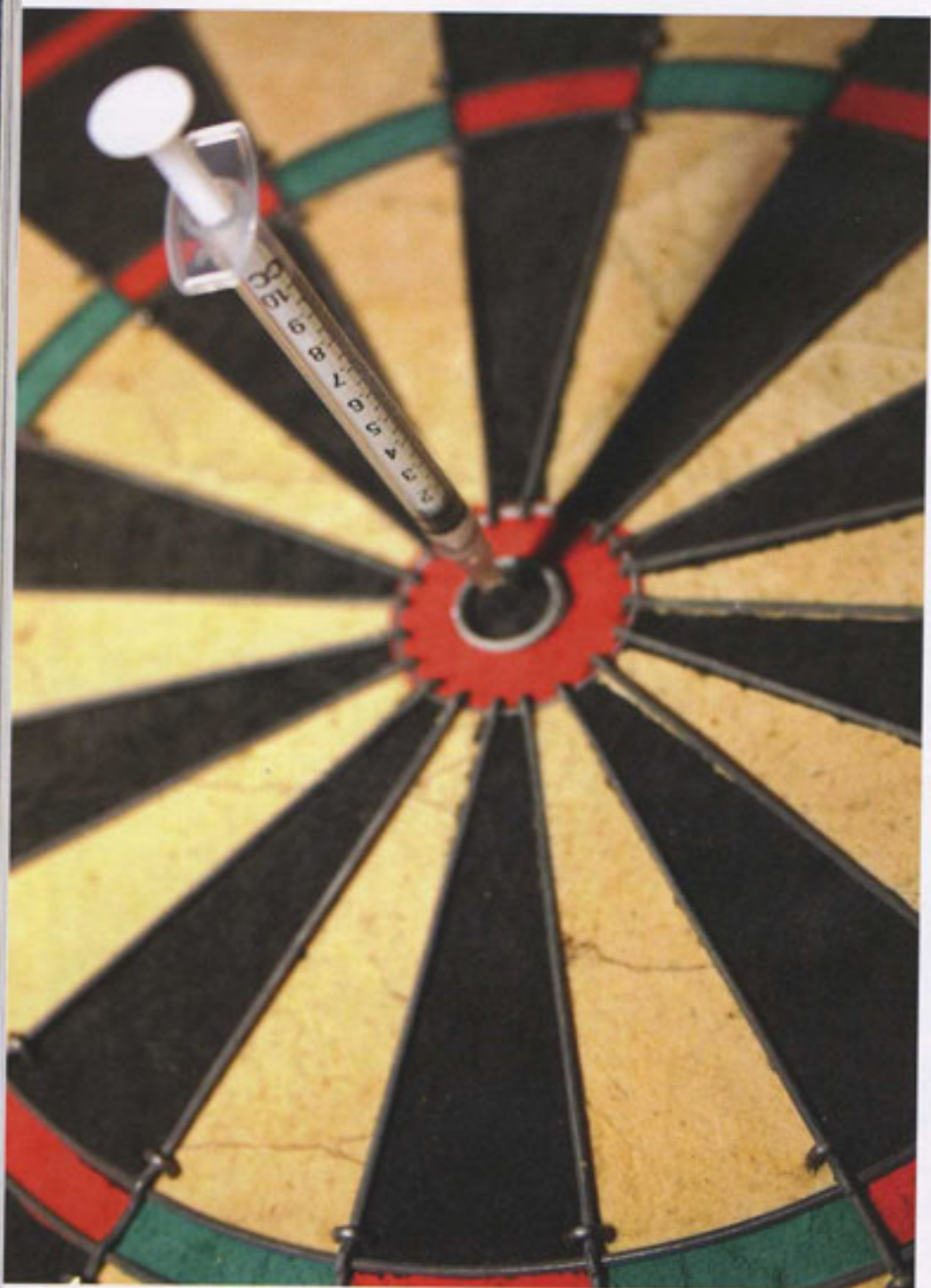


# Hitting the right spot

Offering facial aesthetic treatments can help give your practice a competitive edge. Here, **Lindsay Woolf** explains why training, and insurance, in this area is the only way to make sure you hit your target



Training is a must for anyone looking to gain expertise in the newly-found world of facial aesthetics. The right courses and the correct instruction can work wonders for personal confidence, increased skill sets and practice expansion.

Whenever we move into new activities and areas of practice, most of us do so with some trepidation, and few of us would do so without the full and relevant training.

As facial aesthetics become ever more popular in dental practice, increasing numbers of practitioners are taking steps to discover all there is to know about this in-demand, satisfying and profitable therapy.

Jenny Cook, who practices at the Summervale Cottage Dental Practice in Tunbridge Wells, is one such dentist, whose curiosity got the better of her and led her into a whole new realm of professional satisfaction.

'I went on a study day and found it so interesting. I felt that it was such a fantastic and interesting addition to dentistry. I am very enthusiastic about these treatments and find the work exceptionally rewarding', Jenny said.

Like Jenny, Robin Warne of Huddersfield Dental Implants and Cosmetics was keen to learn the detailed procedures of facial aesthetics. After attending basic and advanced courses, he was clear about the benefits. When asked what advice he would give to colleagues contemplating taking the plunge, he responded by saying: 'Learn, learn, learn! Ensure that you are fully trained and confident in offering these new services.'

'Patients attend for their dentistry but are pleased to discover that they can also have dermal fillers and skin injectables. Similarly, people attending for facial treatments are delighted to have their dentistry completed at the same place and by someone they trust.'

### Is it dentistry?

A question often debated is whether facial aesthetics is really dentistry.

Jenny has no doubts about its place in helping to 'put a frame around a new smile' and providing a patient who has invested time and money in their appearance with not just a great new smile but also a life-enhancing, improved look.

Dr Rafaella Gabassi, has found exactly the same positive outcomes in her practice in Godstone, Surrey, with a 70:30 ratio of NHS to private patients.

'The uptake of these procedures has been great for those who want to improve their appearance,' reports Rafaella, adding that her own satisfaction from helping such patients is immense. 'There is nothing like seeing someone smile with confidence for the first time in their life. I am very privileged to be able to help.'

Robin concurs with this view, adding that offering facial treatments has broadened the appeal of the practice to the public, giving him the competitive edge that is so important in today's dental marketplace.

Patients attend for their dentistry but are pleased to discover that they can also have dermal fillers and skin injectables. Similarly, people attending for facial treatments are delighted to have their dentistry completed at the same place and by someone they trust. 'We are already trusted dentists, we are the right people to provide this service in a clinical environment,' explains Robin.

Rafaella has seen how uptake has grown from people in all walks of life.

'People still think that it is a thing for the rich but it costs less than many of the expenses we incur on a daily basis'. She is finding that the message is gradually sinking in for her patients, who are increasingly aware of the benefits and the affordability.

### Type of treatments

For a beginner the range of terms can be bewildering; skin injectables (botulinum toxin type A), dermal fillers and facial peels, but none is so complex that it is outside the accepted clinical skills and knowledge of a dentist.

When added to the established activities of tooth whitening, veneers, crowns and cosmetic dentistry in general, the advantages of being able to provide facial harmony are a logical extension of patient care.

However, the range and application of techniques and materials underline the need for comprehensive training to ensure competence and familiarity.

Prior to carrying out any of the procedures Jenny did three full days of training, which allowed her to gain her certificate to commence training and get insurance cover.

### Profitability and costs

The costs involved for the dentist need to be considered, but the profitability is clearly good.

Additional insurance is required, which can be in the order of £1,000 a year – but there are specialist insurers out there.

As the realisation grows that the risks are minimal, premiums have actually been falling.

While there are regional differences in market rates and even in perception of appearance, there was no difference among the practitioners to whom I spoke on one important issue. The first and most important step is to get good training – but from then on you will find the world smiling back at you. **PD**

### Comments to [pd@fmc.co.uk](mailto:pd@fmc.co.uk)

Lindsay Woolf is the training manager for Med-fx Training.

The Dental Directory has teamed up with Med-fx Training to offer a series of dedicated training seminars. All courses are recognised by Hamilton Fraser Insurance Solutions (HFIS plc). The sessions cover a variety of topics including dermal fillers, botulinum toxin, chemical peels, and cosmeceuticals. In order to register for a course, or simply to get more information, please visit [www.medfxtraining.co.uk](http://www.medfxtraining.co.uk) or call the Med-fx Training Team on 01376 532832.