Providing facial aesthetics in general practice

The growth of the non-surgical facial aesthetics market in the UK has been phenomenal over the last 10 years and it shows every sign of continuing. As reported by the International Association for Physicians in Aesthetic Medicine (IAPAM) and other aesthetic medicine associations, there were 11.4m cosmetic minimally invasive procedures performed in 2010, and 5.4m of these were Botulinum Toxin. Physicians who incorporate these procedures into their practices, should reap significant rewards in 2011 and beyond. The allure of improving one’s appearance, without the surgeon’s scalpel, is a very strong incentive for the continuing growth in demand for the facial aesthetic industry.

Most dentists are unaware of the benefits that facial aesthetic treatments can have as an adjunctive therapy in dental practice. A beautiful smile is not only determined by the colour and position of the teeth but also extra-oral soft tissue, including lip, cheeks, nasal labial folds, marionette lines, chin, and jowls. These treatments are as essential to aesthetic dentistry cases as porcelain veneers, composite resins and bleaching. It seems that as dentists, the profession has become too tooth-centric, that the importance of the perioral areas to look as good as the teeth can be forgotten.

The demand and versatility of the products and treatments is ever increasing, not only for ‘wrinkle reduction’ treatment, but for a host of other problems; hyperpigmentation, reducing pore size, muscle spasm/ TMJ and bruxism cases, to mention but a few. Botulinum treatment can often be used in conjunction with dermal filler therapy as a non-surgical alternative to high lip lines cases. In the past the only treatment available involved aggressive treatment plans, involving periodontal flap surgery, crown lengthening, possible orthodontics and crown and bridge therapy. Although the results are long lasting the disadvantages are obvious; the number of appointments, high cost and the possible complications. The advantages of non-surgical treatment is the close to immediate results in one appointment, non-invasive and often much cheaper! The disadvantage is the requirement of repeated treatments; however it is not important, to increase the patient’s choices!

Dentists should be aware of the clinical benefits as well as the financial rewards that go with performing total facial aesthetic therapy. With proper training, dentists are among the best qualified to provide these services. They are the only healthcare professionals that can practice total facial aesthetics; not only can the teeth be treated cosmetically but, with further training, the facial aesthetics can be enhanced. Dentists have the added advantage of having a thoroughly trained specialist in the field of facial anatomy and proficiency with local injections. Many already possess the skills and experience of running a business, with an existing loyal clientele that know and trust them.

When incorporating facial aesthetics into practice, it is often helpful to follow a few fundamentals:

- Understand the fundamentals and ongoing hands-on training. Keep up to date with the trends in aesthetic medicine and attend regular courses, such as those offered by Quality Conferences
- Develop a successful business plan, integrating aesthetic procedures into your practice, taking advantage of existing patient base.

Aim to maximise profits by offering the most profitable aesthetic procedures, tailored to meet client’s specific needs

- Open to offer more procedures to your patients thereby maximising the potential for each patient
- Become proficient in aesthetic patient consultations, making your clients aware of the procedures available at the practice.

The field of facial aesthetics is constantly evolving which makes it not only challenging and exciting, but also very rewarding. Quality Conferences next Facial Aesthetics seminar is to be held at the prestigious Ardencote Country Club on November 4, 2011. This will be an overview of most of the points raised in this article and give a greater insight into the field of facial aesthetics.