

Botox and beauty bargains

With news that Superdrug is to offer Botox and dermal fillers in store, now might be the perfect the time to inject new life into your own marketing strategy, says **Shaz Memon**

Botulinum toxin is Ms Popularity when it comes to minimally invasive aesthetic procedures, with dermal fillers close to stealing the crown. With their wrinkle-smoothing properties, these non-invasive treatments have seamlessly entered the arena of dentistry – with many aesthetic-focused practices now offering non-surgical cosmetic treatments. They're a great boon for business, and complement aesthetic dental procedures.

However, when the high street chain Superdrug announced plans to offer Botox and dermal fillers at its flagship store in London's West End, clinicians were queuing up to find flaws.

That Love Island feeling

For aesthetic clinicians, it smacked not only of cheapening the treatments (£99 for forehead or crow's feet Botox treatment at The Strand branch), but also of creating the perception that these clinical procedures are just like any other casual beauty treatment.

For a dental profession already wrestling with illegal teeth whitening at 'bargain' prices in beauty salons and pop-up shops, the 'high street' hype rankled. The announcement strangely coincided with

a change of heart by the Joint Council for Cosmetic Practitioners (JCCP), which did a U-turn and decided beauty therapists would not be included on its new voluntary practitioner register.

By blocking non-medics, it goes some way to providing the public with a guaranteed safer route to non-surgical cosmetic treatments – although many may argue full regulation will be the only way to ensure this.

Wrinkle correction and lip plumping has slowly crept into the public psyche as the 'norm' – thanks largely to celebrity endorsements and, of late, the *Love Island* effect. In fact, the injectables now comfortably sit alongside hair styling and colouring, nail extensions, eyebrows threading and other beauty treatments, even though Botox is a prescription-only medicine and both procedures require an aptitude for needle use and infection risk management.

By the book?

With the benchmark set within the architecture of the JCCP register – with practice and educational standards and competencies clearly outlined within – does Superdrug's launch undermine its intent?

Reassuringly, qualified nurse practitioners will be at the helm of delivery of the chain's Skin Renew service, and the company says it has partnered with Allergan, the maker of Botox, which will be supplying both products and patient advisory material.

According to beauty journalist Alice Hart-Davis, who trialled the service: 'They're taking the whole thing immensely seriously as they need to, given the dodgy reputation of the aesthetics industry in the UK. They're also refusing to treat anyone under 25, which helps diffuse accusations that, having sponsored *Love Island* where the girls had had a good bit of work, they're encouraging youngsters to step up to the needle.'

She also suggests that Superdrug goes one step further than some clinics she's previously attended in offering a more thorough consultation, with a 'passport' booklet detailing what injections recipients had, where and when, and by whom – a valuable lesson in good patient communication for all practitioners, she concludes.

Competing with the high street

So, in this highly competitive market, where treatments are made easily accessible and at 'high street' prices, what can aesthetic dental practices do to set themselves apart from the rest?

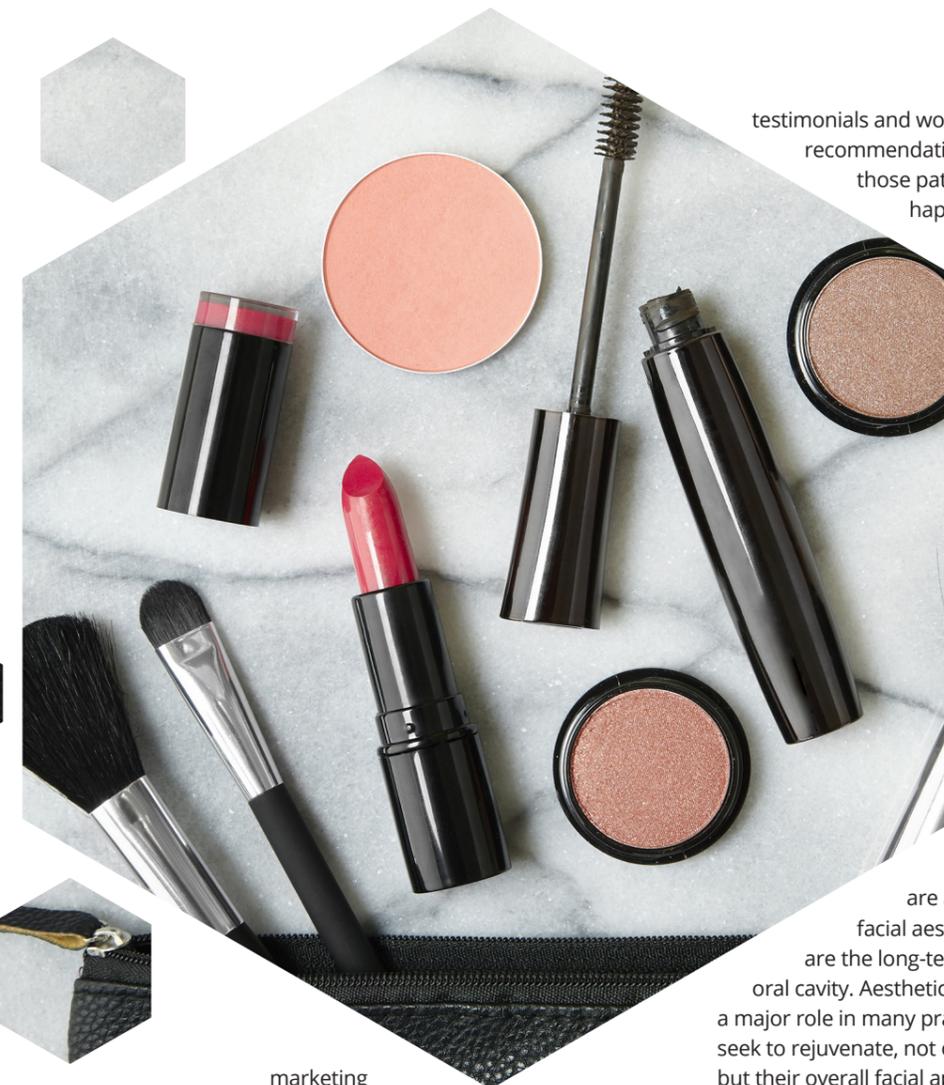
It's all about the setting

The tranquillity of a clinical setting is an essential part of delivery. Patients are invariably apprehensive about receiving new treatments, and it is important to emphasise that your team is trained and experienced in the both the procedures offered and the accompanying knowledge and empathetic care.

So, talk about your calming environment online, highlight the videos your patients can watch whilst in the chair, share photos of the high-end consultation room and relaxing waiting area, and emphasise the fact your facilities are perfectly placed to deliver safe treatment – and, in a medical emergency, deliver an essentially rapid response. If you have an emergency telephone number, be sure to give it out.

Reassuringly professional

The expectations upon you regarding your



testimonials and word-of-mouth recommendations. Engage with those patients who are happy to share their patient journey.

Above and beyond

In today's dental environment, the demands placed upon practitioners are as much about facial aesthetics as they are the long-term health of the oral cavity. Aesthetic treatments play a major role in many practices as patients seek to rejuvenate, not only their smiles but their overall facial appearance, too.

Indeed, some may argue that dentists are in an advantageous position inasmuch as they can offer patients a beautiful face as well as a great smile. They also understand the physiology of the face and how to create symmetry to enhance it. Any treatment that helps lift and revitalise the skin that frames that smile is seemingly a natural bedfellow so make sure your patients understand your strengths.

Success inevitably lies not just in evidence of your clinical expertise but also in complete patient satisfaction with the overall end results – so share the feedback of satisfied clients with prospective patients on your website or in social media posts.

As a dental professional, you are in a unique position to deliver non-surgical cosmetic treatments, having undergone detailed human anatomy dissection of the head and neck as part of your dental

An eye on you

As a dental professional, you are in a unique position to deliver non-surgical cosmetic treatments, having undergone detailed human anatomy dissection of the head and neck as part of your dental

qualification.

You also work in a clinical environment governed by the Care Quality Commission and so, from an infection control perspective, your practice is safely regulated – a headache for you, perhaps, but of interest to savvy patients who are risk adverse. If you've had a successful inspection recently, then let patients know. Link to the CQC's website with a line to say 'you can see how we compare to other practices locally'.

An eye for detail

Dentists also have the skill and manual dexterity to inject, as Dr Ian Hallam, practice principal and cosmetic dentist at Meon Dental in Petersfield, Hampshire, notes: 'Dentists

spend all day every day injecting local anaesthetic in the restrictive confines of the mouth for dental procedures and so are very skilled at using syringes.'

'Cosmetic dentistry also requires an artistic eye in order to achieve symmetry, balance, proportions and aesthetics. They naturally have an artistic eye when it comes to assessing and carrying out facial aesthetic treatments. And dentists are used to treating nervous patients, so they are more tuned in to treating patients as painlessly as possible.'

So, make sure you share with your audience the whole range of treatments you offer in clinic and talk about your clinical experience and your ethos as well as the clinical environment in which you work. If you have recently broadened your skillset, make sure your qualification is listed on your practice website in your biography. If a team member has just returned from a course, share the news – whether it is in infection control or in the latest Invisalign applications.

And make sure you showcase your work using case studies of patients who you have treated and who are delighted with the results. Any good practitioner will have case study photographs to illustrate their results.

One suspects the team at Superdrug has yet to begin building a comprehensive treatment portfolio.

Care to comment? @AesDenToday

BIOGRAPHY



Shaz Memon is the creative director of Digimax and Digimax Dental and has worked with leading dental and non-dental names. Digimax Dental uses

non-dental industries to infuse creative expertise into dental marketing. Some of Digimax's clients include House of Fraser, McDonalds, Formula One, James Caan and Caffè Concerto. Shaz specialises in offering bespoke, creative, high-end design solutions that encompass branding, website design, top Google rankings, e-marketing and more – just for dentists. Learn more at www.digimax.dental