

Government reiterates commitment on licensing of non-surgical aesthetics sector in England

The JCCP, British Beauty Council, and the Chartered Institute for Environmental Health (CIEH) have received assurance from the UK Government that it's committed to the licensing of the non-surgical aesthetics sector in England.

After submitting a joint letter on behalf of the aesthetics industry to the Department of Health and Social Care, the industry bodies received a response outlining how the department is designing and implementing a new system of licensing for the non-surgical cosmetic industry.

This comes after the Government made its initial commitment in March 2022 to bring forward future regulation to protect patient safety by making it an offence for someone to perform these cosmetic procedures without a licence.

In a response last week, the Minister responsible for taking forward this issue, Maria Caulfield, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Mental Health and Women's Health Strategy, stated that "departmental officials will work as quickly as possible to introduce the licensing scheme and will consider all the important areas."

This assurance comes as an investigation into the UK's aesthetics industry, aired on ITV1's 'Tonight' programme on January 26, uncovered the compelling impact of the industry and unpicked the challenges facing the sector.

In their correspondence, the supporting lobbying groups set out key priorities for the Government to action in its now-approaching licensing. These are:

1. The design and implementation of a national licensing scheme for all premises where licenced procedures are conducted as well as practitioners of non-surgical cosmetic procedures to ensure that all those who practise invasive procedures are competent and safe for members of the public (as proposed in Paragraph/Clause 180 of the Health and Care Act, 2022).
2. A requirement for all practitioners to hold adequate medical insurance in order to provide non-surgical cosmetic procedures.
3. The development of official guidance on the training and qualification expectations for all practitioners, including knowledge and application of infection controls and first aid training.
4. The development of a system for the effective recording of adverse incidents and public awareness raising to ensure that all cases that go wrong can be tracked and improvements to safety made as a result. Members of the public need better tools and knowledge in order to protect themselves.

Minister Caulfield set out the Government's plans for ensuring standards for adequate training, insurance, first aid, and premises in her reply. She also affirmed the development of future licensing to suit the ever-developing industry, saying: "We know this is a fast-moving sector, and officials will consider how best to future-proof the regulations so that new and emerging treatments are captured by the scheme."

It is anticipated that the Government will outline its timetable for the implementation of the new licensing scheme in England within the coming weeks as part of its wider response to the Health and Social Care Committee's Inquiry Report on body image.

Victoria Brownlie, Chief Policy Officer at the British Beauty Council said:

"It's encouraging to hear that the Government remains committed to bringing forward licensing of non-surgical cosmetic procedures. With almost a million botulinum toxin or cosmetic filler injections now being administered each year, regulation is needed more than ever to protect consumers seeking these kinds of non-surgical treatments. We need to create a level playing field to give piece of mind that adequate training, hygiene and safety standards come as standard when having aesthetics treatments – raising the reputation of the sector and professionalising the industry as a whole."

Prof. David Sines CBE, the Chair of the JCCP said:

"We are reassured by the response received from the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State to the key issues raised in our letter of representation to the Secretary of State and to matters raised directly with the Health and Social Select Committee in recent months which have also been supported by Jeremy Hunt and his colleagues.

"We very much look forward to continuing our engagement with the Government and health care regulators during the forthcoming months to realise the key objective of embedding patient safety and public protection for members of the public who elect to engage with non-surgical procedures within the context of national enforceable legislation."

Ross Matthewman, Head of Policy and Campaigns at the Chartered Institute for Environmental Health, said:

"We are delighted to see the Government firmly commit to bringing forwards the new licensing regime for non-surgical aesthetics in England. This is an area that we and our partners have campaigned tirelessly on culminating in the amendment to the Health and Care Act allowing the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to create such a scheme.

Creating better regulation of this industry is vital if we are to ensure consumer safety and create a genuine level playing field for practitioners. We look forwards to working closely with the Government on the next steps."

NOTE TO EDITORS

1. The JCCP registers practitioners and training providers with the key remit of ensuring patient safety and public protection. It has been established to assist members of the public who are considering non-surgical treatments, such as injections, fillers, lasers, peels and hair restoration surgery. It offers advice on patient safety and how to gain access to registers of approved practitioners. The JCCP practitioner register operates through the Professional Standards Authority which is accountable to Parliament. The JCCP is a UK registered Charity. The JCCP published a 10-point plan in 2021 for Safer Regulation in the Aesthetic Sector, https://www.jccp.org.uk/ckfinder/userfiles/files/10_point_plan.pdf
2. The British Beauty Council is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to solving beauty's shared challenges. It represents the wider industry by generating conversation with Government. In order to tackle issues facing the industry today and in the future, the Council collaborates a diverse network of patrons and affiliates so that every sector within the beauty industry can thrive.
3. CIEH is the professional voice for environmental health representing over 7,000 members working in the public, private and non-profit sectors. Building on its rich heritage, CIEH ensures the highest standards of professional competence in its members, in the belief that through environmental health action people's health can be improved. Environmental health has an important and unique contribution to make to improving public health and reducing health inequalities. CIEH campaigns to ensure that government policy addresses the needs of communities and business in achieving and maintaining improvements to our environment and our health. For more information visit www.cieh.org and follow CIEH on Twitter [@The_CIEH](https://twitter.com/The_CIEH).

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