Practice Directive
Providing Aesthetic Services

College of Registered Nurses of Prince Edward Island

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Background

This tool is a resource for nurses who currently provide or are considering providing aesthetic services to help them understand:

- What are considered aesthetic services
- Requirements to work as a nurse in medical aesthetic clinics
- The scope of practice of nurses working in medical aesthetic clinics
- The scope of practice and accountability of NPs providing medical aesthetic services
- When this practice can be counted towards nursing hours

Like all regulatory tools, use this document in conjunction with employer policies, applicable legislation and the standards of practice and code of ethics for RNs and NPs.

What are aesthetic services?

Aesthetic services are the provision of specialized procedures for the purpose of cosmetic treatment such as, but not limited to, dermal fillers, volume enhancers, collagen stimulators, lipolysis and neuromodulators such as Botox.

Esthetic services are different than aesthetic services and do not need to be performed by a regulated health professional (such as: facials, waxing, piercings, tattooing including semi-permanent makeup). These would not fall within the definition of nursing. These hours would not qualify as nursing practice hours.

Do I require additional education to work as a nurse in medical aesthetic clinics?

Nurses working in medical aesthetic clinics require additional education to attain and maintain the appropriate competencies. Additional education is required because entry-level nursing programs do not include education and training in this area of nursing practice. Nurses are expected to collaborate with their employer to obtain the necessary education and training to gain competence in the provision of aesthetic nursing services.

Does the College approve aesthetic education programs?

The College is not involved in the approval of non-nursing education programs or education programs that are not entry-level nursing programs. The College does not endorse any particular aesthetics program. It is the responsibility of the nurse that any education or training they undertake provides core competencies to achieve competence to perform aesthetics procedures safely.
What should I consider when providing aesthetic services?

Understanding the difference between providing nursing care in the aesthetic practice context and providing aesthetic services.

Recognize that aesthetic services are not benign procedures and pose potential risks to clients including an increased risk of morbidity.

All clients require a/an:

• Initial assessment by a qualified NP or physician with the appropriate competence in aesthetic nursing/aesthetic medicine.

• ongoing nursing assessments to determine whether they are achieving the intended outcomes, and,

• subsequent assessment by a qualified NP or physician when they are not achieving the intended outcomes or there is a change in dosage.

• authorizing mechanisms such as, a direct prescriber order, a pre-printed order set specific to the client, or a medical directive is necessary to enable nursing practice.

What is the nursing scope of practice when providing aesthetic services to clients?

Nurses care for clients in the medical aesthetic context in collaboration with care providers who have the required competence in aesthetic or cosmetic treatments. As in all contexts, an authorizing mechanism must be in place and there must be an appropriate and authorized prescriber available for consultation, which may include being available to assess a client on-site.

Nurses work within their designated scope of practice to care for clients and are obligated to consult and collaborate with an appropriate care provider when the needs of the client exceed their individual competence, professional scope of practice, or when clients are not achieving outcomes as intended.

When must the authorized prescriber be available?

The availability of authorized prescribers will vary from context to context. The practice context will guide the need for collaboration based on a variety of factors that would need to be taken into consideration such as: treatment, client status and nursing experience.

The Registered Nurses must:
• understand employer policy outlining contexts requiring additional prescriber consultation or nursing collaboration, and

• know how to access authorized prescribers when needed.

**What are my accountabilities to assess risk to the client?**

Registered nurses should recognize when the risk associated with a procedure, treatment plan, medication or situation is heightened. For example, with initial dosages of medications, changes in medication dosages, new site, and clients with a history of adverse or inconsistent response or reaction to previous treatments.

Nurses are accountable to:

• implement strategies before implementing the intervention, such as consulting or collaborating pre-intervention or ensuring they have access to a prescriber or collaborator if needed post intervention.

• follow established protocols to mitigate any risks to clients that may occur when an intervention has been implemented based on collaboration, such as accessing equipment, providing emergency intervention or transporting clients to an acute care facility if warranted.

• assess and evaluate the appropriateness of providing the intervention, as well as to assess their competence in performing the intervention safely and competently.

• ensure the plan of care remains appropriate for the client.

• to follow legislation and their nursing Standards of Practice to ensure they properly document the care they provide to clients, including assessment, intervention and client outcomes.

**Can I count hours worked as a nurse providing aesthetic services towards my current of practice hours?**

Hours worked as a nurse providing aesthetic services may be counted as long as your practice meets the legislated definition of nursing services. Do not advertise nursing services in publications or website until you have confirmed that your practice meets the definition of nursing found in the Regulations for Registered Nurses.

CNPS Resource:
Considerations for Providing Cosmetic Services - Canadian Nurses Protective Society (cnps.ca)