

## All-Party Parliamentary Group on Beauty, Aesthetics and Wellbeing

### Minutes of Meeting

#### **Inquiry session into non-surgical cosmetic procedures**

#### ***Session 8 – Ministerial Session***

**Date: Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> 2021**

**Time: 13:30 – 14:00**

**Location: Zoom**

**Minutes taken by: Sarina Kiayani, Interel UK (Secretariat)**

#### **Members present**

Judith Cummins MP, APPG Co-Chair

Carolyn Harris MP, APPG Co-Chair

#### **Witnesses**

Nadine Dorries MP, Minister for Patient Safety, Mental Health & Suicide Prevention, Department for Health and Social Care

#### **Audience**

Katherine Morgan, APPG Secretariat

Victoria McNish, APPG Secretariat

Sarina Kiayani, APPG Secretariat

Allaster Gair, APPG Secretariat

Melanie Abbott, BBC Radio 4, Women's Hour

Caroline Larissey, NHBF

Victoria Brownlie, NHBF

Victoria Elms, Sky News

Dawn Knight, Victim of malpractice and campaigner

David Sines, JCCP

Ashni Lakhani, BBC 3

Caroline Black, Policy Adviser, Professional Regulation, Department for Health and Social Care

Sarah Clover, Barrister at King's Chambers

Martyn King, Aesthetic Physician and Chairperson at the Aesthetic Complications Expert Group

Christine Mozzamdar, Transform Hospital Group

#### **Minutes of the Meeting**

**Carolyn Harris and Judith Cummins MP** opened the meeting and welcomed the Minister.

**Minister Nadine Dorries MP**, thanked the APPG for the invitation and the attention it has brought to an important topic with the inquiry, which she described as “cutting edge” and coming “at the right time”.

Introducing her formal address, the Minister said that the non-surgical cosmetics market is growing exponentially, but crucial data and research is missing. She said she hoped that the APPG’s report will contribute to this, and that also noted that the Government will be using the report when reviewing the industry.

She noted that the value of the non-surgical cosmetics market is predicted to rise to £3.6 billion in the UK by the end of this year, and the industry is a significant employer of women and servicer of women, with 90% of procedures carried out on women. Thus, the industry is run by women for women.

Due to this, she said, the non-surgical cosmetics industry should be celebrated, and we should not shame responsible practitioners and those who use their services. However, she added that there have been some abuses and risks within the system, with women left distressed and scarred every year through poor practice by a minority of practitioners.

She described her priority as a health minister as ensuring that the right regulatory systems are in place and that there are high levels of practice in this area. She added that the Government has made several moves to improve patient safety, including a performance assessments and the publication of ratings for cosmetic surgery providers since 2017 under the CQC’s oversight, running PR campaign publicising guidance on choosing a qualified practitioner, and updating information on NHS UK. The Government also promoted the work of the Joint Council on Cosmetic Practitioners and Safe Face, who maintain an accredited register of practitioners.

However, as this is an expanding industry, she stated that there is more work to be done. The Minister told the APPG to share anything they think she should be aware of in particular prior to the report’s publication to enhance patient safety.

The Minister also expressed support for the APPGs and Committees looking into women’s wellbeing, Laura Trott’s Private Members Bill on Botulinum Toxin and Cosmetic Fillers (which she sponsored and which received Royal Assent on 29<sup>th</sup> April), and the powers granted by local authorities to tackle rogue practitioners.

The Minister spoke about how the Government is working with the MHRA to consider how the Government’s regulatory framework for medical devices could be widened; this includes provisions to make all dermal fillers medical devices.

The Minister was concerned at the Women and Equalities Committee’s public survey findings that 61% of adults and 66% of children feel negatively about their body image most of the time, linking this to the increasing non-surgical cosmetics market, with these people more likely to be exploited by this. She added that the Committee have been great at exposing these issues.

The Minister re-iterated that most practitioners operate responsibly regardless of their background, and having a healthcare or medical background does not necessarily lead to these practitioners being skilled at injecting Botox and fillers. However, she is aware of the absence of mandatory national standards of competence and appropriate qualifications for practitioners, which can affect practitioners looking for appropriate training providers, and consumers who want to make an informed choice.

She closed her statement by saying that women are very often the victims of patient safety malpractice, and said she will be looking at the Women's Health Strategy consultation (closing on 13<sup>th</sup> June) when working to improve this. She encouraged attendees to share this, to contribute to the Government's evidence base and the subsequent mandate for change.

**Carolyn Harris MP** thanked the minister and re-iterated the importance of skills and knowledge amongst industry practitioners. She said that the inquiry has shown a rivalry between medically trained and non-medically trained practitioners, but the APPG has not made any decision about whether one is better than the other, agreeing with the Minister's points on this. She said that a major issue were those practicing without adequate skills or knowledge, regardless of their background.

She also referenced the impact of social media adverts for clinics and practitioners without qualifications. She referenced a case of a GP working with a clinic advertising a lifetime remote prescription of Botox for £50, and asked the Minister for her thoughts on tackling this.

**The Minister** said that there was no place for politics in women's health. She said that she was committed to improving the quality of safety procedures, and, to do this, options around training need to be assessed. She used the example of heart surgery, where she would want this to be carried out by a practitioner trained in cardiology, rather than a practitioner who did cardiology in their spare time. She said that this analogy also applies to the beauty industry – customers would want practitioners who are primarily trained to carry out the procedures they have requested. She said that we must improve training and recognise standards of training.

Regarding social media, she said that this was the responsibility of social media giants, however the Government continues to make them aware of the impact of their platforms, and the need for continued scrutiny. She said that these social media giants dislike being shamed, so encouraged the APPG to raise awareness of issues related to social media in its report.

**Judith Cummins MP** thanked the Minister and re-iterated the importance of securing appropriate regulation for the non-surgical cosmetics industry. She suggested a national licensing scheme to provide assurance for consumers and practitioners, as raised earlier in the inquiry, and asked the Minister for her thoughts on this.

**The Minister** responded that the Government was willing to look at increasing local authority powers, including those relating to prosecution, as linked to Laura Trott's Bill. However, as there is no legal definition of professional practitioners, these powers may be difficult to use.

**The Minister** thanked the APPG and said she looked forward to the report being published and hopefully discussed in the House of Commons chamber.