

# PRESS RELEASE



**For immediate release: Friday, 11 February 2011**

## **MDDUS WARNS DENTISTS OVER ANTI-WRINKLE INJECTIONS**

Dentists risk falling foul of the law unless they follow regulations on providing anti-wrinkle injections such as Botox.

The UK-wide dental defence organisation MDDUS is warning that some dentists are unclear about rules for advertising injectable cosmetic treatments. It is an offence to promote prescription only drugs by using their product names and those who do so risk criminal prosecution.

Rachael Bell, dental adviser, warns: "The promotion of medicines labelled Prescription Only Medicine is prohibited. The danger lies in the fact that some of these products used in the treatment of wrinkles have become 'household terms' for the technique. Dentists need to be very wary before using these terms."

MDDUS reports an increase in enquiries from dental practitioners about indemnity for providing aesthetic injections in the face.

As a result it is reminding dentists to be fully aware of all the legislation that may affect how they provide that service.

Bell says: "In the last two months of last year the Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency (MHRA) asked a total of 37 clinics to change their website advertising of injectable cosmetics."

The MHRA is an executive agency of the Department of Health whose duties include monitoring and dealing with complaints regarding advertisement of medicines and medical devices.

A failure to comply with any requirement imposed by a notice served under the Monitoring Regulations is a criminal offence.

"Dentists need to be aware that failure to comply with the MHRA can lead to a fine and/or imprisonment for up to two years," explains Bell.

"Where the MHRA believe that a criminal offence has been committed, it will always consider enforcement action, i.e. prosecution. Civil sanctions are also available under the Monitoring Regulations.

“Unless you want your profit and your registration to be at risk dentists must remind themselves of the rules and regulations.”

MDDUS stresses that the MRHA’s definition of advertising applied to medicines is not limited to specific media, and includes “articles in published journals, magazines and newspapers, display on posters (within or out-with the practice) and notices, photographs, film, broadcast material, video recording, electronic transmissions and material posted on the internet. Point-of-sale materials, leaflets, booklets and other promotional materials that include specific product claims and which are supplied separately from the product may also be considered advertisements.”

MDDUS advises dentists providing cosmetic injections to read the MHRA document The Blue Guide which covers advertising regulations and guidance.

The Blue Guide states: “As an example, advertising for cosmetic clinics and beauty salons (*dentists would be included*) may promote the service provided, e.g. ‘treatment for lines and wrinkles’, as this is non-specific and may include various procedures. But advertising must not mention product names such as ‘Botox’ or ‘botulinum toxin’.”

The General Dental Council states that it “expects registrants to continue to follow our Standards Guidance in providing non-surgical cosmetic treatments and alternative therapies not linked to a patient’s dental treatment.”

Bell concludes: “Before carrying out such treatments, registrants must check with their defence organisation that they have appropriate indemnity cover to carry out non-surgical cosmetic treatments and alternative therapies not linked to a patient’s dental treatment.

“If you have any queries or are in doubt about your advertising, seek advice first rather than waiting to receive a letter from the MHRA”.

## **Ends**

For further information contact Colin Calder on 0141 616 2677 or 07850 510881.

## **Note to editors**

MDDUS (The Medical and Dental Defence Union of Scotland) is a medical and dental defence organisation providing access to professional indemnity and expert medico- and dento-legal advice for doctors, dentists and other healthcare professionals throughout the UK. For further information on MDDUS go to [www.mddus.com](http://www.mddus.com).