Managing unrealistic expectations is key in making your practice a success. An unhappy patient can pose a serious threat to your business, in making a claim, tying up your resources and they can seriously tarnish the reputation you worked so hard to build.

Yet, as a cosmetic practitioner, it can be hard to turn down a patient after all the effort to get them through the door in the first place. Saying ‘No’ is never an easy thing and at Hamilton Fraser Cosmetic Insurance, we would like to give you the confidence to manage these awkward conversations better, ultimately helping you to make your business a success.

**BE HONEST**

Tell your patient:
- The results would never meet their expectations if you agreed to undertake the procedure
- A less principled practitioner might undertake the procedure but not to their satisfaction either
- It would be a frustrating experience for both patient and practitioner because you spent time, money and effort on unrealistic goals
- You are honoured they came to you but you do not want to disappoint your patients in agreeing to something that is unattainable

**EDUCATE**

Tell your patient:
- Why their goal is not achievable
- What would be a better alternative (if applicable)
- If there is anything your patient can do to become eligible for the procedure (i.e lose weight, no tan etc.)

*Our new combined policy is designed to meet all the insurance needs of today’s aesthetic practitioner with one comprehensive solution. To find out more call 0800 63 43 881*
BE GENTLE AND EMPATHETIC

Tell your patient:
• That you would recommend a referral to their GP if you think they might suffer from Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD)
• Why they are not a good candidate for the procedure
• That you apologise for not taking their request further (if you like) but that you feel they are set up for disappointment

Dr Simon Ravichandran is the founder and chairman of the Association of Scottish Aesthetic Practitioners.

Dr Emma Ravichandran is a graduate of Glasgow University Dental School and co-founded the Clinetix Medispa group in 2010 with Dr Simon Ravichandran.

Both are nationally recognised speakers and educators on aesthetic medicine and have lectured and demonstrated extensively throughout the UK.

How do you say ‘No’ to a patient with unrealistic expectations?

We have both learned over the years that treating a patient with unrealistic expectations leads to the largest number of problems we have as a clinic. The subsequent visits and consultations, and sometimes further treatments to try and reach a patient’s goal are time consuming, frustrating and unrewarding. On occasion it can lead to the threat of litigation which carries its own not inconsiderable burden. In the long term it is always far better not to treat than to treat.

“I employ an ‘honesty is the best policy’ approach. Simply telling the patient that we do not feel able to meet their expectations is surprisingly effective. Suggesting a different opinion from a respected colleague or referring for a treatment that we do feel would be effective is also useful.”

- Dr Emma Ravichandran

“Like Emma, I agree it’s always best to be upfront and honest. At the end of the day the patient will respect you more for saying no than for providing a treatment that leads to dissatisfaction.”

- Dr Simon Ravichandran

For more resources and advice, please go to our website www.cosmetic-insurance.com

Hamilton Fraser Cosmetic Insurance is a trading name of HFIS plc. HFIS plc is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.