How the aesthetic nursing association in north west England supports best practice

Founded in 2006, the Private Independent Aesthetic Practitioners Association (PIAPA) is a group that welcomes all health professionals working in medical aesthetics, helping them to learn from each other and improve patient care and safety. Greta Bumstead, co-founder of PIAPA, tells aesthetic nurses what the association in north west England stands for and how they can benefit from membership up-to-date advice and guidance and affords each of us the opportunity to work together collectively for the benefit of all.

Benefits of joining
PIAPA provides an open and friendly culture for its members, offering:

> A hub for group advice, support and guidance from professional, business and regulatory perspectives
> Mentorship
> Ongoing training and training materials
> Regular group meetings and seminars, with guest speakers
> A comprehensive support network
> Support for those undertaking the V300 non-medical prescribing course.

To become part of our association log on to www.piapa.co.uk

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ike many other aesthetic nurses in the UK, I left the NHS and, for some years now, have been the director of my own independent practice. I have been in nursing for over 30 years, spending the latter third of that time focusing on skin care and medical aesthetic treatments. However, following my initial training within and across the aesthetic industry I was concerned that, in my view, it was insufficient both in terms of customer care (most notably injecting safely) and ensuring that my small business remained customer and skills focused plus regulatory compliant. Since any further training available was (in those days) expensive, almost exclusively based in the South, and with no proper accreditation, I contacted Yvonne Senior—a trainer in the North of England—to discuss what could be done to improve the situation for me and everybody in my situation.

Yvonne had already recognised the problem I approached her with and, some years earlier, had formed a small support group for aesthetic nurses in the north west of England. With my added support and enthusiasm in 2006, the two of us were instrumental in developing this further through the formation of the Private Independent Aesthetic Practitioners Association (PIAPA)—a non-profit association of professionals who could be collegiate, learn from each other, and improve patient care and safety.

Beyond commercial concerns
In its early days, PIAPA had no funding or administrative support and was there primarily to provide advice and guidance to fellow aesthetic nurses practicing in the north of England. Its initial aim was to develop as an association by attracting like-minded aesthetic nurses who had the passion to look beyond their own commercial concerns, simultaneously building membership and using the increasing numbers and knowledge base to help newly qualified aesthetic nurses who otherwise had no ongoing training, supervision or support.

Since those early days PIAPA’s membership has grown far beyond those initial nursing and northern boundaries, developing in recent years to include medical aesthetic practitioners—doctors and dentists as well as nurses—from across the UK and Ireland. PIAPA’s increasing size and diversity has also now afforded it a voice within the industry.

Working without isolation
As independent aesthetic practitioners, we all find ourselves working in a constantly changing professional and economic landscape, with many of us working alone on a self-employed basis. For this reason, PIAPA provides the support to ensure that all aesthetic nurses operate safely and with confidence. PIAPA also encourages members to openly share any concerns and enquiries without fear of judgement, since everyone including the most experienced of practitioners can learn from others experiences both good and bad.

In the commercial environment of aesthetic medicine, it is important to support best practice, seek evidence-based practice for our work and provide a framework for clinical supervision. Without all of this, we would devalue the professional standing that we have worked so hard to achieve, but it also ensures good customer care and minimises the risk of malpractice. In this period of unprecedented uncertainty PIAPA offers...