

Report on	The regulation of cosmetic treatments in Northern Ireland
Date of Meeting	10 th November 2022
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director of Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	Melanie Patterson, Principal Environmental Health Officer

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To inform Members of the Health Minister's response to Council's request for better regulation of cosmetic treatments in Northern Ireland
2.0	Background
2.1	Members may recall that previously a paper was presented to September 2022 Development committee on this matter and it was resolved to support the Local Authority Health and Safety Liaison Group's request and agree to send a letter to the Health Minister to ask for better regulation of cosmetic treatments in Northern Ireland, along with the introduction of a licensing scheme for non-surgical cosmetic procedures (minute reference: D137/22)
2.2	The popularity of aesthetic non-surgical cosmetic treatments has grown rapidly in recent years, with new non-surgical cosmetic procedures continually emerging on the market. Cosmetic treatments are those carried out for non-medical reasons, usually for aesthetic purposes.
2.3	The existing legislation available to Environmental Health Officers in Northern Ireland to regulate this sector is however considered no longer fit for purpose.
2.4	In October 2021 the <i>Botulinum Toxin and Cosmetic Fillers (Children) Act 2021</i> came into force in England making it illegal to administer Botox or a filler by way of injection for a cosmetic purpose to a person under 18 years of age. No such law exists in Northern Ireland.
2.5	The introduction of a national licensing scheme to govern the oversight of advanced aesthetic non-surgical cosmetic treatments was one of seventeen recommendations made by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Beauty, Aesthetics and Wellbeing following their Inquiry into advanced aesthetic non-surgical cosmetic treatments.
2.6	The UK Government recently confirmed its intention to introduce a licensing regime for non-surgical cosmetic procedures to better regulate the cosmetic industry in England through an amendment to the Health and Care Bill.
2.7	The licensing scheme proposed for England will introduce consistent standards that individuals carrying out non-surgical cosmetic procedures such as lip fillers, Botox etc. must meet, as well as hygiene and safety standards for premises. The new licensing scheme will focus on those cosmetic procedures which, if improperly performed, have the potential to cause great harm.

3.0	Main Report
3.1	Following a previous committee paper in September 2022, Members will already be aware that there has been a significant rise in the number and type of non-surgical aesthetic procedures available in recent years, with many practitioners performing treatments without being able to evidence appropriate training and the required standards of oversight and supervision.
3.2	The existing legislation available to Environmental Health Officers to regulate this sector in Northern Ireland is considered no longer fit for purpose, with the current legislative controls only covering a very limited range of treatments. As Northern Ireland does not currently have a licensing scheme (like that being introduced in England), many newer, riskier treatments will therefore be unregulated.
3.3	Following the Local Authority Health and Safety Liaison Group's (HSLG) letter seeking Council support in this matter, Members agreed the contents of a letter to be sent to the Health Minister seeking the better regulation of cosmetic treatments in Northern Ireland. The letter agreed by and sent from Council is set out in Appendix A.
3.4	Following Council's correspondence to the Department of Health, a response was received from the Health Minister on 10 th October 2022. The letter which is appended (Appendix B) outlines the role and limitations of the Regulatory and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) in regulating within the cosmetic treatments sector. It also outlines the role of the 'Medicines Regulatory Group' in regulating the provision of Botox treatments.
3.5	In his correspondence the Health Minister also gives a commitment to resume his review into regulatory policy, taking account of the issues which have emerged over recent years. It is hoped that this Review of Regulation will be taken forward during the current mandate of the Assembly.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: None anticipated at this juncture.
	Human: None anticipated at this juncture.
	Risk Management: None anticipated at this juncture.
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	That Members note the contents of this report which sets out the Health Minister's response to Council's letter seeking the better regulation of cosmetic treatments within Northern Ireland.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix A – Council's letter to the Northern Ireland Health Minister.
6.2	Appendix B – Letter of response from the Northern Ireland Health Minister

