

**TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS TO SHOW CLINICAL AESTHETIC TREATMENTS**

**PROTOCOL**

**Introduction**

It is best practice to take photographic documentation of all treatments that are more clinical in nature both before and after treatment and at every treatment given.

They provide an easy way of documenting visual features to show treatment progress and outcomes and they can be used to great effect in marketing strategy and the training environment. They also provide good evidence for insurers, should it be required.

You must have informed consent before any photograph is taken.

**The Camera**

There are many cameras to choose but it is generally thought that many of the well-known, easy to use, pocket cameras can be adequate for this purpose. Mobile phones and tablets are widely used but all photographs must be transferred inmmediately to a secure static storeage device such as a desk top computer or within a secured memory device.

* It will need to be a digital camera for ease of use, production of pictures, and transfer and storage of images.
* A reasonable megapixel capacity. 7 to 10 megapixels is more than adequate for clinical photography purposes.
* It will need to have a high quality lens that preferably extends from the camera when focusing.
* It will need to have both a digital and optical zoom capacity. Digital zoom only will lead to considerable loss of quality when the zoom is used.
* It will need to have automatic and manual settings.
* It will need a fast rechargeable flash.
* Some cameras have an additional inbuilt digital image stabilization technology (blur reduction technology). It reduces blur caused by camera shake, subject movement, or fast action situations, which can be useful.
* The ability to take macro images will be ideal.

**NOTE**

**PHOTGRAPHS TAKEN ON MOBILE DEVICES MUST BE TRANSFERRED TO A SECURE STOREAGE DEVICE OR PLACED IN A LOCKED DRAWER OR FILING CABINET**

**ALL PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT BUST BE DISINFECTED BEFORE AND AFTER EACH USE – ISOPROPYL ALCOHOL OR MEDICAL DISINFECTANT WIPES ARE THE SAFEST, MOST EFFECTIVE AND CONVENIENT METHOD TO USE**



**How To Ensure Your Photographs Are Useful And Fit For Purpose.**

Taking good ‘fit for purpose’ pictures may take practice so allow this opportunity. It will also require you to make the best of your environment to ensure the subject is in the best position for the photograph to be taken successfully.

**Lighting**

* Consider the lighting to avoid shadows and light variances.
* Natural diffused light will be preferable but when taking photographs indoors a white fluorescent diffuse light should be used. Make sure you cannot detect shadows or glare in the viewfinder.
* If client is in a seated position on the treatment couch position your treatment lamp above and to the front of the clients head so that is shines directly over the face with an even distribution without casting any shadows but avoiding dazzling the client.

**Background**

* Consider the background and anything else that will be in the picture.

Facilitate a screen that is attached to a wall or door that can be pulled down to form the background this will ensure continuity and eliminate unwanted images.

* For complete correctness in clinical photography a photographic background cloth could also be selected to provide a standardised, non-reflective background. This will give contrast between the skin and the background and not cause glare.

**Distance**

* A distance of approximately 3 feet is preferable. Have a marker position so that this distance is always the same.

**Preparation of the client**

* A headband should be used to pull back the hair.
* Remove visible jewellery or hair clips.
* The client should, wherever possible be standing.
* If you need to have the client seated then ensure uniformity of chair and height.

**Positioning of the Client**

**Standing**

* Encourage the client to stand with their feet shoulder width apart, to relax the shoulders, and neck and stare directly into the camera relaxing facial muscles without any animation.
* The client must have their head positioned so that they are looking straight ahead and not tilted forward or backwards.
* Take both front profile and side profile pictures.
* To ensure positioning is correct ensure that the corner of the eye is horizontal to the top of the ear. View this from the side and then ask the client to remain still whist you take the images.
* Position camera consistently for all photographs at a 12 inch distance form the tip of the client’s nose
* When taking side images the client should turn all their body not just their head.

**Sitting**

* The client should sit up straight, as near to a 90° angle as possible
* Follow all other directions as above

**Lying Down**

* Ensure that you have targeted lighting to illuminate the area to be treated
* Position yourself and the camera so that you do not cast a shadow over the area
* Take front and side images at a 12 inch distance

**Taking the Photograph**

* Always use the macro mode on your camera if available
* Flash or not?
* Pictures taken with flash are more forgiving than those without. What ever you chose you must stick to the same mode in order to avoid being accused of falsifying results.
* Using a flash can eliminate shadows but it will not pick up the details of the skin in the same way as those taken without it.
* If using a camera rather than a phone or tablet, position a sticker or card that can be seen within the picture frame that has the name, date and treatment that has been carried out.
* Zoom in until you have the desired shot. Always zoom in to the same position
* Allow the camera time to focus and work out exposure before pressing the button. Many cameras have a facility that will allow you to depress the button half way, give time for the camera to sort these elements and then indicate when you can press the button fully.
* If using a phone or tablet, immediately save the photographs with the clients name date and treatment information

**Transfer And Storage Of Your Photographs**

It will be imperative to transfer and store in accordance with data protection legislation. Ensure you do not carry these images around with you wherever possible but if this is necessary then you must ensure they are in a protected format.

* You can easily transfer your photographs to your computer through a card reader/ USB port. Most cameras will allow you to put the camera memory card directly into the computer whilst others may require you to have a USB lead from the camera to the computer.
* Store the pictures in JPEG Format in clearly labelled files (include the person’s initials /reference number, date and treatment reference. Your computer will store them for you in alphabetical order.

**Printing Of Your Pictures**

If it is necessary to have hard copy images, ensure that the images are always printed on the same paper at the same size to ensure consistency