INTRODUCTION:

I love the International Congress of Esthetics and Spa Conferences! I always feel energized when I am here and always leave inspired.

This is such an exciting time in our industry.

The importance of combining skin care with medical services is evident now more than ever and continues to grow.

By working together with a physician, you can produce exceedingly positive and beneficial outcomes for patients, and enjoy a successful and fulfilling career.

I am Nikki Fletcher. I am an esthetician who has worked primarily with plastic surgeons and I am also an educator at on esthetics school in NY. I have taught advanced classes such as the paramedical esthetics class as well as the full time NYS licensing curriculum for estheticians just joining our field.

I hope to share practical, valuable and professional experience with you.

I will be presenting clinical considerations at 3:30 where we will focus on best procedures for treating patients within the medical practice, but right now, I would like to cover some tips on building a synergistic relationship with physicians and medical personnel as well as how to best maintain that relationship so that you can enjoy your success at work.

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It was in the 1990’s that medical practitioners starting realizing the value estheticians could bring to their practices and since then there has been a growing demand.

So, who’s bringing estheticians into their medical practices these days? Plastic surgeons, dermatologists, outpatient clinics, hospitals, laser centers, and medical spas. There has also been a dramatic increase in the number of medical doctors such as OB/GYN and ENT physicians who are adding cosmetic treatments to their services.

More and more physicians are trying to get away from insurance-covered treatments and this trend is expected to accelerate.

So what are these physicians looking for when they want to hire an esthetician? Each practice is a little bit different., but all agree that estheticians must have a working knowledge of the medical treatments performed in the practice, which typically include injectable fillers, neurotoxin inhibitors, laser treatments and often, cosmetic surgery procedures. It is important that estheticians know how to appropriately space esthetic treatments between medical services, and also know what the patient should do before, during and after medical procedures. (We will be answering these questions in the 3:30 presentation).

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The key to getting the most out of the business relationship between the physician and esthetician is respect and trust. Open communication is a must.

Many of you may have different ideas of you’re your relationship with the medical spa industry should look like.

You may be employed and work within the physical practice (easiest scenario).

You may be an independent business located within the medical practice or independent in a different location from the physician.

If you are a spa owner, you may be looking for collaboration, a physician to refer client’s to.

What your relationship will look like depends not only on the professional relationships you are able to forge, but on the state laws and regulations.

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Benefit of being an employee:

Benefit of being IN medical office, protocols can be put in place to help facilitate the work of both the physician and the esthetician. Every new patient that comes into the practice for a consultation with the physician should be introduced to the esthetician. This builds trust between the patient and the esthetician. The physician’s support of the esthetician paves the way for patients to be shifted off of the physician’s schedule conversely when clients are ready to be referred to physician for injectables and surgical procedures.

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Medical spas are medical facilities and therefore are subject to rules and regulations governing many aspects of their operation.

If you are considering forging an alliance with a medical professional (structured beyond being employed by the physician), I highly recommend hiring a health care attorney. Because there are no federal standards and regulations vary wildly from state to state, your health care attorney should be local to you.

I am not a lawyer and have no legal background but I am familiar with the laws in my home state, NY. Your laws may be different, so here are some considerations when you do meet with your attorney.

OWNERSHIP ~ NY laws are based on a doctrine known as the corporate practice of medicine” ( I understand that most states are based on this) What that means is that medical facilities (medical spa are considered medical facilities) must be owned by physicians or physician owned corporations. So you want to check to see if your state observes the corporate practice of medicine.

In NY, only a licensed physician can own a medical spa. Not an esthetician, nurse, nurse practitioner, or PA. Not even if they employ a medical director.

FEE SPLITTING~ could be an issue in a “renting type arrangement”

Physician who owns a medical spa may not be conducting most of the treatments, and may wish to reward the people who are actually dealing with the patients — “sell so many laser hair removal packages and you will receive x number of dollars or 10% of the value of the packages sold”.

Many states that observe the corporate practice of medicine also have laws that prohibit what is known as “fee-splitting.” According to these laws, all payments for medical treatments must be made in full to a physician or physician-owned corporation. If a percentage of that payment is directed instead to an employee, that transaction constitutes fee-splitting. If a medical spa is found to have engaged in fee-splitting, the physician faces suspension or revocation of his or her license, as well as a significant fine or fines. In addition, the employee also faces a fine or fines, so it’s in everyone’s best interest to make sure that this is avoided.

All this is not to say that a physician cannot reward his or her employees for their hard work, however — offering a structured bonus instead of commission is perfectly legal.

IN NY, A NURSE, ESTHETICIAN PA OR NP CANNOT TAKE A COMMISSION FOR ADMINISTERING LASER TREATMENTS OR INJECTABLES LIKE BOTOX. THIS PROHIBITION IS DESIGNED TO ENSURE THAT MEDICAL AND NURSING DECISIONS ARE BASED ON SOUND CLINICAL JUDGMENT, UNCOMPROMISED BY ECONOMIC OR BUSINESS CONSIDERATION. NEW YORK LAW PROHIBITS LICENSED INDIVIDUALS FROM ENGAGING IN FEE-SPLITTING OR PROFIT SHARING.

(can have preset bonus structure , still rewarded, but not related to number of treatments. No dividing or sharing of fees)

ANTI-KICKBACK (could be an issue with a referral type of relationship)

Estheticians may develop referral relationships with a variety of doctors that specialize in gynecology, endocrinology and internal medicine, all of whom treat disorders that may affect the health of the skin.

Anti-kickback means that there’s no financial incentive for referrals to you or patient or physician. No one can benefit financially from referrals.

As an employee you are covered for malpractice under the doctor’s policy, however if you are practicing as an independent contractor within the practice you may not be covered, so carry your own professional liability insurance policy.

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FOLLOW THE LAW:

The medical esthetician must be trained on the legalities of working in a medical office. Familiarize yourself with these regulations and follow them at all times.

Undergo training on HIPAA compliance. A medical spa is a facility that follows the same standards as a medical practice. If you’re going to use the word med or medical, it is a medical facility, and you follow all HIPAA laws and infectious disease standards.

**HIPAA:**

In a medical setting, you must adhere to federal laws regarding patient privacy. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) restricts how and what patient information you share.

A potential problem that medical professionals bring with them is the issue of patient privacy.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and state laws that govern patient privacy dictate that the personal health information (PHI) of all medical patients—essentially, anything that can possibly be used to identify patients—is absolutely sacred and must be kept private. Because medical spas are medical facilities, they are subject to HIPAA and related state laws, so they must not do anything to that could reveal the identities of their patients.

Be particularly careful with regards to the use of social media and how you market your medical spa on social media. Whereas a traditional spa or salon would think nothing of thanking a client on Facebook or responding to a customer’s comment on Twitter, a medical spa cannot engage with patients in this way—publicly acknowledging in any way that someone is a patient is a violation of his or her HIPAA rights. Even posting a picture taken in a medical spa with a patient in the background can represent a patient privacy violation.

This can be especially difficult when someone leaves a negative review on a review site, such as Yelp, because this means that there’s nothing a medical spa or its employees can do to defend the business’ reputation on that forum. However, as difficult as it might be to ignore situations such as those, they absolutely must be ignored. The punishments for violations of patient privacy laws are staggering—potentially hundreds of thousands of dollars per offense.

Medical spa owners and operators owe it to themselves to learn everything they can about how patient privacy laws apply to them and to proceed with the utmost caution.

Be sure to be [Health Insurance Portability and Accounta­bility Act](http://www.dol.gov/ebsa/newsroom/fshipaa.html) (HIPAA) compliant with your online conversations and triple check consent forms before ever using patient photos.

**OSHA:**

In a medical setting, you must adhere to federal laws regarding workplace safety. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) produces regulations to protect employees form illness and injury on the job.

OSHA was created by Congress in 1970, and its mission is to prevent work-related injuries, illnesses and deaths by issuing and enforcing regulations for workplace safety and health. OSHA standards relating to a medical office differ from a typical spa environment, and must be learned before starting any position in a medical environment.

Practice clinical methods when working with a physician, using sterile techniques and time-tested modalities.

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THE ESTHETICIAN WORKING IN A MEDICAL FACILITY MUST SEEK ADVANCED EDUCATION:

NEVER STOP LEARNING

All estheticians should have a solid education focused on the skin, product knowledge and sanitation procedures. Although it is important to know the basics first, an advanced education will set an esthetician apart from those who are limited by only knowing the fundamentals.

An esthetician will gain respect from the doctor by taking a clinical, scientific approach to skin care. Possessing knowledge of how the human body functions as well as dermatology and medical terminology will help reinforce the doctor’s trust in the esthetician’s abilities. It is the responsibility of estheticians to keep up-to-date on the latest advancements in the skin care industry and the medical field as well. Continue their education as needed.

This field keeps advancing and you need to keep up if you are going to be successful. Take as many classes as you can, go to seminars and trainings, and continue to read up on the newest procedures and treatments. Remember, patients are always looking for the latest and greatest in treatment, and if you do not know how to do it, they will find someone who does. Constantly be on the lookout for new procedures, new products, and new ways of helping patients.

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**LASER:**

In a medical spa, an esthetician may be assigned to provide laser therapies, such as laser hair removal, vascular, spider vein or intense pulsed light (IPL) treatments, along with body-shaping procedures and treatments for improving the appearance of cellulite.

Unfortun­ately, due to abuse by inadequately trained spa professionals that has resulted in client injury, many states have had to tighten laws that control procedures performed by estheticians. The requirements for training and having a physician on-site are being enacted and aggressively enforced in many states.

**IN NY STATE:** The website of the Department of State, Division of Licensing Services states as follows:

The Department has issued a decision regarding the use of laser devices by appearance enhancement licensees, in which it held that "the use of laser or non-ablative radio-frequency procedures, including Thermage, to treat any medical condition, including the removal of wrinkles and spider veins, is the practice of medicine, and the practitioner must be a physician, or a nurse practitioner supervised by a physician, who is licensed by the New York State Department of Education.”

Chart all procedures, fully explaining any incidents that may occur. Include everything from whether a patch test was done to what settings were used, as well as any follow-up phone calls or letters.

Record complete treatment protocols, keep them easily accessible and update them regularly.

Have each patient sign an informed consent before beginning any procedure. The form should clearly state any possible problems and the range of outcomes, as well as who will be performing the procedure and that person’s credentials.

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**SOCIAL MEDIA:**

***Be consistent.*** If you are trying to enhance relationships with clients and gain new ones, commit to a schedule of posting a blog or entry on your various online sites.

***Be educational.*** Offer exciting and intriguing information on industry advancements, positioning your business as a valued resource.

***Be visual.*** With facials, products and testimonials, the cosmetic industry is perfectly in line with the principles of social media. Consider a treatment of the week to show pictures and videos of, and post before-and-after photos of outstanding results.

***Be a professional.*** As an esthetician or provider, the way you position your online reputation will likely parallel the reputation you build in your community.

Be sure to track and evaluate your online activity; there is a fine line between growing your business with social media and wasting your life with social media.

Send eblasts to your mailing list every month with one spa special and one medical practice special.

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Benefit of being an employee:

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I KNOW THE BENEFITS SECTION IS IN THE WRONG PLACE OF THIS SPEECH. SHOULD MAYBE WORKED IN EARLIER???

BENEFITS: (of any form of alliance)

Key to relationship success ~ the key to getting the most out of the business relationship between the physician and esthetician is respect and trust (AND a business must be profitable to succeed.)

**BENEFIT TO MD:**

Because there is immense pressure on physicians to see a large number of patients in a day, physicians often find themselves pressed for time. Having a licensed skin health professional on their practice team to whom they can refer their patients for peels, facials, and a number of other more time consuming esthetic treatments is a benefit to all involved (setup home are regimens).

Benefits to a physician to form alliance:

Increase the number of times a patient enters facility (micros, facials, etc)

Help prolong the results of medical procedures therefore increasing patient satisfaction

Support retail sales. Estheticians can educate on products, services and handle retail products.

Adverse reaction awareness

Most physician’s offices offer products and services that may be more effective, but also may have a greater risk of adverse reactions if not used properly.

because the side effects can be quite serious.

We are offering physicians big opportunities to escape health insurance reimbursement issues.

Physician stands to quickly increase their visibility with prospective patients because a busy spa can have more than 100 clients coming through the door daily.

Those who received skin care services from my highly trained estheticians while using effective products remain loyal to the practice.

Benefits to physicians

Doctors generate revenue bc esthetic treatments are cash based services

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**BENEFIT TO ESTHETICIAN**

Physicians to refer to dx or support

Estheticians not only gain more experience, but the procedures and products used are validated when medical professionals recommend them. This gives estheticians the ability to treat clients more effectively, and therefore, build a solid clientele.

Benefit to esthetician is guaranteed foot traffic

Always remember, working with a physician does not change your scope of practice though! This is NOT a benefit as some may believe.

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**BENEFIT OF BEING AN EMPLOYEE:**

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**BENEFIT TO PATIENTS:**

One of the most important duties of estheticians in a medical practice is to give primary comfort to the patient. It is critical that patients are treated more gently than usual after medical treatments and that they are constantly made to feel more at ease. This is especially important because surgical procedures can be extremely distressing for many. More often than not, patients become loyal clients and trust the esthetician because of the comfort and help received during this stressful time.

Benefit to patient

Physician plus esthetician equals happy patient

Patients receive procedures in a setting that they know and trust.

Dr. + esthetician = client receives desired result when dr and esthetician work together.

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RESUMES:

Maintain a personnel file including all certificates and other evidence of training.

(also necessary if there is ever a complication with a treatment)

What are you bringing to the table?

Really evaluate your own offerings: (resume)

We need to remind ourselves of how great we are and what we have to offer

What is the level of investment to get started? What equipment do I need to get started?

You have expertise in a given area, and you have the time to use those expertise

Realize your value and what sets you apart

Who is your competition?

It is anyone who your customers compare you to.

Be prepared to sell your skills and explain jowl you can benefit him or her. Tailor your approach to the doctor you are speaking to. For instance, surgeons might want to know how you can help soothe a patient how is recovering form a facelift

It is beneficial to have a complete professional resume ready listing all educational qualifications and academic training. If the esthetician holds special certification such as CIDESCO or NCEA, it should be included on the resume, along with an explanation of what each certificate means to familiarize the doctor with esthetic board certifications.

What is going to set you apart and make you stand out?

Looking for a step by step guide to building that relationship with a physician. Regardless of whether you are a spa owner or an independent esthetician, you may be working with them at different capacities, you can still build that relationship the same way and that is to identify how synergistically you can enhance one another services. Unless the doctor is looking for you, it is your job to identify that and help create your niche, look for your niche and market and promote yourself and how you can make his services better or alleviate work for him so that he can work more efficiently. The idea is always more efficient but safe. And that is something that you can offer.

Which services will bring the most clients through the door and keep them coming back?

What makes us indispensible?

When interviewing with physicians, research their specialty and what types of treatments are offered in the practice. After getting to know the doctor, ask to observe procedures in order to have a better understanding of the protocols followed.

During the interview, keep in mind that you are interviewing the physician as much as she is interviewing you. Will your personalities work together? Is the doctor gracious, warm and receptive? Does she have a working knowledge of esthetics, and what an esthetician can do for her practice? Is the physician willing to support the esthetician, and is she comfortable referring patients for services or products?

Make sure that they realize the value

We have the same goals

When interviewing with a doctor, an esthetician must do her research to find out the doctor’s specialty and what types of treatments are offered in his practice. After she gets to know the doctor, an esthetician should ask to observe procedures to have a better understanding of the protocols followed by the doctor.

Do your personalities clash or mesh (esthetician and doctor)

Does the doctor have working knowledge of what an esthetician can do for his practice? Is the doctor willing to support the esthetician and is he comfortable referring patients to her for service or products?

For plastic surgeons and dermatologists, esthetic services go hand in hand with the procedures they perform and offer complete patient care.

is doctor

board certified or board eligible in his/her specialty.

Associate your self with an established specialist who respects an esthetician as a true skin care professional, rather than just a facialist.

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**EXPAND YOUR ROLE:**

**is the website up to date?**

**Other ways to make yourself indispensible**

Private Label Product Development:

As an extension of a practice or spa’s brand – as well as an additional revenue stream – private label skin care products are becoming increasingly important in the market. (\*look at plusses and minuses in beautifully profitable)

They ask me if a particular procedure would be right for them and what it might cost,”

work to design facial cosmetic surgery packages to give clients one-stop shopping

definitions of supervision requirements vary from state to state

Learn all you can about the laws in your state governing this type of arrangement

SUGGEST POST OPS ARE SEEN AT THE MEDSPA SO THAT TREATMENTS CAN BEGIN IMMEDIATELY

In the past 15 years alone, there has been nearly a 250% increase in the total number of cosmetic procedures, according to [American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery](http://www.surgery.org/). With a remarkable 461% increase in nonsurgical procedures alone, esthetic medical practices had to make important decisions regarding skin care and the integration of esthetics. To remain competitive today, those adaptations need to be considered on a daily basis to achieve ultimate client satisfaction.

“Skincare brands change their promotions each month, so if you’re ordering quarterly, you might miss out on good deals or added values that can be passed on to your patients,” she says.

, who finds that it is most effective if the physician is the one to introduce the idea of using better skincare products to patients. “When I’m in the treatment room with patients I will talk to them about skin care,” he says. “Then I turn them over to our nurse who further describes the benefits of the products and provides details, such as how much to apply and how often.”

In some cases, it may make more sense for the nurse or esthetician to begin the homecare education process by talking with patients about their skincare history and current product usage prior to treatment. The nurse or esthetician can then share their recommendations with the physician. “They can slip a note into the chart or somehow communicate with the physician about the relevant talking points. That way, the groundwork has been set and the physician can follow up. For example, ‘I understand my nurse Stephanie has talked to you about these homecare products, and I agree with her recommendations,’” says Said.

Many practices depend on their nurses or estheticians to educate patients on homecare products. These staff members take part in manufacturer training and have the luxury of spending more time with patients to discuss the ingredients and benefits of the practice’s lines. But it’s important to remember that patients come to a medical practice or med spa for the expertise of the physician.

Therefore, the best strategy is for the physician to make the final recommendation. The person who closes the deal by agreeing with the skincare recommendation made by staff is the physician.

His practice is also strict about documenting treatments, something many estheticians have not been trained to do. “They need to document the treatment performed, the device settings used—a lot of spa personnel don’t write all of that down. You also need to make sure your estheticians are using the proper templates and getting proper consent. There’s a lot more structure in a medical practice than in a typical spa,” he says.

Standardized treatments may also be new to estheticians who have previously worked either on their own or in a setting that allowed them more freedom to perform their own treatments. “We standardize protocols so the patient is always getting the same treatment, regardless of who performs it,”

Additional avenues to promote esthetic services include offering mini-facials and product giveaways as part of open house events and posting monthly specials on skincare kits in your retail section,

building esthetic services and post procedure care products into your pricing for surgical and laser procedures. This not only helps to improve outcomes, it introduces patients to homecare regimens.

Strive to become and stay profitable without compromising patients/guests benefits and safety. More doctors are becoming aware that their practices are also retail businesses. The building of a medical spa in an increasingly competitive environment. Social networking and managing patient testimonials is vital to practice growth. Aesthetician can offer expert insight into products, branding and private labeling.

Demonstrate both the passion and the professionalism of the doctor. Physicians and surgeons find themselves ill-prepared to tackle building a business. Medical school is not business school.

KEEP GOING WITH BEAUTIFULLY PROFITABLE (CHERYL WHITMAN) LEFT OFF ON PAGE 2

Because its easy to be overwhelmed by fancy marketing pieces and slick advertising slogans, it is necessary to provide the tools to help make an informed decision on finding safe and effective cosmeceutical products for patients.

Be willing to continually learn and grow. The information you will find here will help you to do this as well as to become a better practitioner.

Manage pre and post op skin care and makeup needs as well as provide a liaison between doctor and patient

As directed by the physician, the esthetician can reinforce home care protocols and the proper usage of medications and help provide education the patient. May also serve as a surgical consultant, answer questions about the procedure and communicate realistic expectations.

Estheticians often the first point of contact. Many time esthetician will see patient before doctor does. It is important to be familiar with recognizing but NOT diagnosing.

Skin care consultations

Analysis

Assessing each patient’s personal skin care goals

Recommending a plan of action to reach those goals

If the plan includes surgery or laser resurfacing the esthetician will outline proper pre and post treatment care to help the patient attain optimal skin health prior to surgery and to prepare the skin for post procedure healing

This may include a series of microdermabrasion treatments , chemical peel treatments or deep cleansing facials after surgery

She will also document the patient’s progress with before and after pictures and record treatment notes in each patients chart

Run the product retail center

Take responsibility for choosing and selling product lines that best suit patient needs

Provide makeup consultation services for post procedure camouflage if necessary

Laser therapy (depending on state regulations)

Hair removal.

Esthetician must practice clinical methods when working with physician, using sterile techniques, time-tested methods and respecting when a patient needs a dermatological; attention instead of aesthetic care.

Estheticians must establish a working relationship with a physician, just as with patients, based on honesty and trust. The physician cannot promise miracles, and neither should the esthetician! Estheticians are not the doctor’s equal. They should not second guess a doctor’s opinion or protocol, and they must admit when they do not understand something. It is easier to explain again clearly rather than assume incorrectly.

Review of menu services. Develop brochures, posters, inserts, email blasts, press releases, and write-ups.

Take control of social media but DO REMEMBER LAWS

Take photos (we will discuss techniques in next presentation)

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Remember: (towards end or beginning?)

Delegation Does not change your scope of practice. A doctor cannot delegate medical tasks. Laser hair removal only in NYS. Treating varicosities (vascularities) is the practice of medicine. Some states it’s ok as long as a physician is on site to supervise.

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EXPAND YOUR ROLE: Some things that you can take on within the relationship that you may not have considered. These things can make you indispensable…

CLOSING:

So go out there with a healthy dose of self-esteem, forge those relationships, or strengthen your preexisting ones. Know that you bring a lot to the relationship, and enjoy your success. I’ll see you back here to discuss clinical considerations at 3:30.

Regardless of whether you are trying to break into the medical esthetics world forging new relationships, or looking to strengthen pre-existing relationships, I hope you feel better armed after sharing this time with me. s