



necessary skills and knowledge to safely and effectively perform these treatments.

But what type of qualification/training should you look out for when employing a therapist in your medical aesthetic clinic?

The magnitude of the different levels of courses has proven to be a huge challenge. In fact, the general public and employers (and, in many instances, prospective students and therapists) are unaware of the differences between these qualifications. Employing a therapist in your practice comes down to so much more than just the treatments they can perform. For instance, attributes such as problem-solving abilities and a high level of independence are also key qualities in a therapist.

Government introduced a single unified National Qualifications Framework (NQF) for education that applies to all public and private institutions in South Africa

The NQF focuses on a list of 'applied competencies', so each NQF level signifies a specific standard of intellectual and academic skills (including problem-solving abilities and learner autonomy). So, the higher the NQF level of your qualification, the higher the intellectual skill, problem-solving abilities and sense of accountability.

For a qualification to be listed on the NQF, the provider needs to be registered with the Department of Higher Education and Training. This will apply to all private and public providers.

The long and the short of it

Now, while short courses are very popular and effective as continuous professional development, they should,

Therapists should clearly understand their level of training, work only within their scope of practice, always act within the best interest of the public, and **provide the highest quality and safest practice possible**

in the process of registering this designation.

The evolution of medical aesthetics

Over the last decade, the roles of therapists working in the industry have evolved immensely – from them performing simple pampering treatments in the beauty salon, to focusing on more result-driven procedures in the medical aesthetics environment. Due to the rapid growth of technological advancements in this field, therapists are now required to work with advanced treatments on a deeper

level (which unfortunately brings a higher incidence of complications with it). Some good examples of the above are procedures such as chemical peeling, microneedling, intense pulsed light and laser (pre- and post-procedure care), as they all require more advanced and detailed knowledge of the specific tissue interactions occurring in the skin – as well as a higher level of problem-solving abilities to deal with possible complications. It is therefore essential that therapists possess the