

**Kent and Medway Policy Recommendation and Guidance Committee
Policy Recommendation**

Policy:	PR 2015-01: Botulinum toxin type A for facial lines
Issue date:	February 2015
Review date:	N/A – Static recommendation¹
<p>Recommendation: The Kent and Medway Policy Recommendation and Guidance Committee (PRGC) has considered up to date information on cost, national and local policy and evidence of clinical effectiveness. Taking these into account, the PRGC recommends that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Botulinum toxin type A² is not funded within the local NHS for the treatment of facial lines <p>Commissioners in Kent and Medway will always consider appropriate individual funding requests (IFRs) through their IFR process.</p>	

¹This recommendation has been placed on a static list. It will only be updated if new information becomes available that is likely to have a material effect on the current recommendation.

²Botulinum toxin is listed as a High Cost Drug Exclusion (Payment by Results Exclusion).

Supporting documents

- Health Care Intervention Appraisal and Guidance (HCiAG) team (2015) *Briefing note – Botulinum toxin type A (BTX-A) for facial lines: Routine review of PR2010-03*
- South East Coast Health Policy Support Unit (2010). *Botulinum toxin for facial lines. Final Report.*

Key findings and rationale

What are facial lines?

Wrinkles are part of the ageing process. They can be attributed to sun damage, effects of gravity and muscle contraction resulting from facial expressions such as frowning and smiling. The appearance of wrinkles caused by muscle contraction can be temporarily improved by treatment with botulinum toxin type A (BTX-A).

What is botulinum toxin?

Botulinum toxin is a powerful neurotoxic agent synthesised by the anaerobic bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*. Different strains of *C. botulinum* produce seven immunologically distinct forms of botulinum neurotoxin, labelled BTX-A to BTX-G. Intramuscular injection of botulinum neurotoxin inhibits the release of acetylcholine at the neuromuscular junction causing relaxation of the affected skeletal muscle.

A number of BTX-A products have marketing authorisation in the UK, but only [Azzalure](#)®, [Bocouture](#)®, [Botox](#)® and [Vistabel](#)® are licensed for the temporary improvement in the appearance of moderate to severe facial lines. Botulinum toxin units are not interchangeable from one product to another.

What national guidance is available?

- NICE have not issued guidance on the use of BTX-A for the treatment of facial lines
- The Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC) issued guidance in 2011 that [Azzalure](#), [Bocouture](#) and [Vistabel](#) are not recommended for use within NHS Scotland as the holder of the respective marketing authorisations did not make a submission to SMC regarding their product in this indication due to its cosmetic nature.
- The All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG) have not issued guidance on the use of BTX-A for the treatment of facial lines

What local guidance is available?

SEC PRC³ Policy Recommendation 2010-03, recommends that botulinum toxin is not funded within the local NHS for the treatment of facial lines.

Does BTX-A work for the treatment of facial lines?

A number of randomised controlled trials demonstrate that BTX-A effectively reduces the appearance of moderate to severe facial lines and is well tolerated. The effect lasts around 3–5 months. While studies have reported consistently high levels of satisfaction following treatment, data on whether this translates to improved quality of life is limited.

Is the treatment of facial lines an identified priority area for CCGs?

When making resource allocation decisions Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) need to take into account the needs of their populations. Funding BTX-A treatment for people with facial lines would require additional expenditure. Kent and Medway CCGs have concluded that additional funding for this population of people is not currently a priority.

What is the cost impact to CCGs of implementing this policy?

No Kent and Medway CCGs currently fund the use of BTX-A for facial lines. Consequently implementation of a policy recommending that it should continue to not be funded would be cost neutral.

³ SEC = South East Coast (Kent, Surrey and Sussex primary care trusts [PCTs]). PRC = Policy Recommendation Committee; forerunner to the Kent and Medway Policy Recommendation and guidance Committee (PRGC)