



Position Statement: Therapeutic Hyaluronic Acid (HA) Injections in Podiatric Practice (July 2026)

Supporting the Use of Hyaluronic Acid (HA) Injections by Appropriately Trained Podiatry Professionals

The Institute supports the therapeutic use of hyaluronic acid (HA) injections by appropriately trained podiatry professionals as an evidence-informed treatment for selected soft tissue conditions of the foot and lower limb.

Therapeutic HA injections are fundamentally different from cosmetic procedures. Their purpose is not aesthetic enhancement but to provide mechanical support, reduce pathological tissue stress, and stimulate tissue repair through the body's own natural healing mechanisms. When used appropriately, HA acts as a biocompatible scaffold that facilitates cellular activity, supports extracellular matrix function, and promotes regeneration within damaged tissues.

The safe and effective delivery of HA injections depends upon comprehensive education, clinical competence, and robust governance. Practitioners undertaking these procedures must receive structured training that includes, as a minimum:

- Detailed lower limb anatomy, including vascular, neurological and musculoskeletal structures.
- Pharmacology and the properties, indications, contraindications and limitations of hyaluronic acid products.
- Patient assessment, diagnosis, selection and treatment planning.
- Injection techniques founded upon sound anatomical knowledge and safe clinical practice.
- Recognition and management of complications.
- Clinical governance, informed consent, documentation, traceability of medical devices, adverse event reporting and regulatory compliance.
- Professional accountability and practice within an appropriately extended scope of practice.

The Institute considers thorough anatomical knowledge and meticulous injection technique to be the primary safeguards in preventing complications. Prevention through education, patient selection and conservative clinical practice should always take precedence over reliance upon remedial interventions.

Therapeutic HA products used in podiatric practice are Class III medical devices and should be used in accordance with current UK regulatory requirements, ensuring appropriate informed consent, device traceability, governance procedures and compliance with professional standards. Practitioners must work within their legal scope of practice and prescribing responsibilities where applicable.

The Institute believes that high-quality education is fundamental to maintaining patient safety and professional standards. All Institute injectable training programmes are delivered exclusively by instructors holding the following professional qualifications:

- Independent Prescriber (IP)
- Supplementary Prescriber (SP)
- POM-A Annotation
- POM-S Annotation

This combination of prescribing expertise and advanced medicines management ensures that delegates receive education from clinicians with extensive experience in pharmacology, therapeutics, prescribing legislation and advanced podiatric practice.

Hyaluronidase

While it is recognised that hyaluronidase can dissolve hyaluronic acid in cases of vascular compromise, it is not considered a mandatory requirement to stock or use this agent to provide HA treatments safely. The rationale is twofold, grounded in both clinical technique and current prescribing legislation.

The requirement for artificially introduced enzymatic HA-degrading agents is exclusively an indication of deficiency in planning the treatment, less-than-optimal application skills, and poor technique.

Furthermore, introducing an enzyme designed to break down physiological components of human tissue is, by its very nature, potentially damaging to the native tissue itself.

Focus must always remain on prevention through robust anatomical knowledge, proper patient selection, and conservative injection techniques rather than relying on an enzymatic safety net.

To promote the argument that all podiatrists using HA should retain stocks of hyaluronidase, a prescription-only medicine, to treat less than optimal administration of dermal fillers - which is entirely avoidable with correct training and strict adherence to careful technique, is as fundamentally flawed and illogical as arguing that all podiatrists using local anaesthetics should have stocks of intralipid, a prescription-only medicine, to treat local anesthetic overdose and toxicity - which is also avoidable with correct training and strict adherence to careful technique. Only 6.6% of the UK podiatry profession are independent prescribers (IP) meaning that only 6.6% of podiatrists should be using LA if the above argument is accepted, when in fact there are 10,469 UK podiatrists (87.9%) using LA, such argument would mean 81.3% of the profession should immediately cease the use of Local Anaesthetics.

Furthermore, careful and accurate administration of fillers in strictly monitored appropriate quantities, with fine gauge needles, recognising and with acquired understanding that the biotherapeutic action of fillers on dystrophic, dysfunctional tissue sites is the aimed for outcome, rather than administering large bolus's of fillers via cannula in vain efforts to 'cure corns' by mechanical means, demonstrates a flawed understanding of tissue biology, wound healing and the pharmacology of both Hyaluronic Acid and alternative agents such as Poly-L-Lactic acids. The pressures in weight-bearing tissue make the overly simplistic concept of being able to effect mechanical cushioning of tissue entirely illusory, and based on flawed, or entire lack, of understanding of hydrostatics, fluid mechanics, pneumatics and hydraulics. All of these factors are explained in easy and approachable fashion in the courses provided by the Institute.

Summary

The Institute therefore supports the integration of therapeutic HA injections into modern podiatric practice when performed by appropriately trained practitioners working within recognised professional, legal and regulatory frameworks. With comprehensive education, rigorous clinical governance and evidence-based practice, therapeutic HA injections represent a safe and valuable adjunct in the management of appropriate foot and lower limb pathology, promoting tissue repair through the body's natural healing processes while improving patient outcomes.

Insurance & Training Recognition

The Institute will not comment on other training courses as the clinical content of the courses, including applications, is not known to us and has therefore not been reviewed or recognised by our Education Faculty.

We only provide insurance for delegates who have successfully completed the Institute's Dermal Filler Injections for the Feet course. As stipulated in this statement, our training includes comprehensive coverage of pharmacology, regulatory requirements, contraindications, and a revision of local anaesthesia (LA), all delivered by highly experienced, qualified tutors, ensuring practitioners have the knowledge and competence required to perform the treatment safely.

Education Faculty
The Institute of Podiatrist