

Guidelines for medical practitioners performing cosmetic medical and surgical procedures

Key Points

- Guidelines have been introduced to inform medical practitioners and patients of the expectations on medical practitioners who perform cosmetic medical and surgical procedures in Australia

Background

The Medical Board of Australia (“**the Board**”) has issued guidelines for medical practitioners who perform cosmetic medical and surgical procedures to compliment Good Medical Practice: A code of conduct for doctors in Australia. The guidelines will take effect on 1 October 2016 to give medical practitioners time to comply with them.

These guidelines aim to inform registered medical practitioners and the community about the Board's expectations of practitioners who perform cosmetic medical and surgical procedures in Australia. Cosmetic medical and surgical procedures are categorised as operations and other procedures that revise or change the appearance, colour, texture, structure or position of normal bodily features with the intention of achieving what the patient perceives to be a more desirable appearance or boosting the patient's self-esteem.

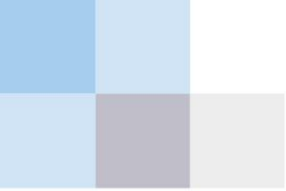
The guidelines provide explicit guidance on patient assessment and informed consent, and require doctors to provide clear information to consumers about risks and possible complications. They also require patients to be provided with detailed written information about costs.

The guidelines implement mandatory cooling off periods for adults and children prior to major procedures as well as a mandatory evaluation by a registered psychologist, general practitioner or psychiatrist for people under the age of 18. The guidelines aim to further protect the interest of those under the age of 18 by implementing a seven day cooling off period before minor procedures, and when clinically indicated, evaluation by a registered psychologist, general practitioner or psychiatrist.

The guidelines also require the treating medical practitioner to take explicit responsibility for post-operative patient care. They require a consultation (either in person or by video consultation) before a medical practitioner prescribes schedule 4 (prescription only) cosmetic injectables.

Conclusion

The guidelines aim to keep patients safe in a rapidly growing (and already well established industry), without imposing an unreasonable regulatory burden on practitioners. The



guidelines will remind patients that all cosmetic procedures (both medical and surgical) performed by medical practitioners carry risks and remind the practitioners that people who undergo cosmetic medical or surgical procedures are patients, not customers.

Contact

For more information on this article, please contact:

Shannon Mony

Partner

T: +61 (08) 9265 6016

M: 0452 210 682

Shannon.Mony@hbalegal.com

Will Goodheart

Solicitor

T: +61 (08) 9265 6016

M: 0437 783 776

Will.Goodheart@hbalegal.com

www.hbalegal.com

Disclaimer: This article is intended for informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice. For any legal advice please contact us.