

Media statement

17 March 2015

Board consults on new cosmetic surgery guidelines

Cooling off periods for all patients and mandatory psychological assessment for under 18s are proposed in draft guidelines for cosmetic medical and surgical procedures proposed by the Medical Board of Australia.

The Board has launched a consultation seeking feedback on the best way to protect consumers seeking cosmetic medical and surgical procedures provided by medical practitioners.

'In lots of ways cosmetic procedures are different from other medical procedures. We are looking for the best way to manage risk to patients without limiting or making judgements about consumer choices,' said Board Chair, Dr Joanna Flynn AM.

Specific guidance for registered medical practitioners who provide cosmetic procedures is one of four options the Board is consulting on, to better protect consumers in this area. Other options flagged in the [regulation impact statement](#) include doing nothing, boosting consumer education, and providing less explicit guidance to medical practitioners.

A regulation impact statement (RIS) details the costs and benefits of proposed options and is required by the Commonwealth's Office of Best Practice Regulation. The RIS provides detailed background information on this issue, including evidence, regulatory context, non-regulatory and regulatory options and the associated impacts, costs, benefits and risks.

Guidelines for registered medical practitioners who provide cosmetic medical or surgical procedures are the Board's preferred option for managing risk to patients. The guidelines propose:

- a seven-day cooling off period for all adults before procedures
- a three-month cooling off period before procedures for all under 18s, along with mandatory assessment by a registered psychologist or psychiatrist
- explicit guidance on informed patient consent, including clear information about risks and possible complications
- explicit responsibility for post-operative care by the treating practitioner, including emergency facilities when sedation or analgesia is involved
- mandatory face-to-face consultations before prescribing schedule 4 (prescription only) cosmetic injectables
- detailed written information about costs and
- limits on where cosmetic procedures can be performed, to manage risk to patients.

'We want to do what we can to keep the public safe, without imposing an unreasonable regulatory burden on practitioners,' Dr Flynn said.

'We think the guidelines could do this, but we want to hear what the community and the profession think,' she said.

More information

- The [regulation impact statement about cosmetic medical practice is published here](#)
- The proposed guidelines are published in Attachment B of the regulation impact statement
- Submissions to the consultation should be emailed to medboardconsultation@ahpra.gov.au
- The **consultation closes on Friday 29 May 2015**
- Visit www.medicalboard.gov.au
- For media enquiries: (03) 8708 9200