



Communiqué

May 2023 Cosmetic Surgery Oversight Group meeting

The independently chaired Cosmetic Surgery Oversight Group (the Oversight Group) held its third meeting on 26 May 2023.

The Oversight Group was established by Ahpra to provide assurance to the community, governments, health practitioners and industry stakeholders that Ahpra and the Medical Board (MBA) are implementing the recommendations of the [Independent review of the regulation of medical practitioners who perform cosmetic surgery](#) (the independent review). The Oversight Group held its inaugural meeting in December 2022, and its second meeting on 7 March 2023.

Consumer voice

The Oversight Group has requested the addition of two consumer members with lived experience of cosmetic surgery to join the group. It is expected these new members will be appointed by the next meeting of the group.

Update on implementation progress of recommendations of the independent review

Members received a detailed progress update from Ahpra and the Medical Board of Australia in relation to each of the independent review's 16 recommendations. Members are pleased with Ahpra and the Medical Board's progress, noting that work has commenced on every recommendation, several recommendations are complete, and others have been completed pending further work with other entities. Members commended Ahpra and the Medical Board on how much progress has been achieved in a short space of time.

Establishing new and stronger guidelines for cosmetic surgery

Members received an update from the Medical Board of Australia Chair, Dr Anne Tonkin AO, about the suite of measures being introduced by the Board to better protect patients having cosmetic surgery. The reforms include revised guidelines for medical practitioners who perform cosmetic surgery and procedures, as well as new guidelines for medical practitioners who advertise cosmetic surgery.

Establishing an endorsement for cosmetic surgery

Members received an update from the Australian Medical Council (AMC) Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Ms Theanne Walters AM, on the development of new accreditation standards for cosmetic surgery programs of study. Education providers can now apply to the AMC to have their cosmetic surgery program assessed and accredited, and graduates of accredited and approved programs of study will then be eligible to apply to the Medical Board for an endorsement on their registration in cosmetic surgery.

Cosmetic surgery enforcement unit

Members received an update on work of Ahpra's Cosmetic Surgery Enforcement Unit. As at 14 May 2023, there were 259 open cosmetic surgery notifications relating to 90 practitioners. Of these, 14 practitioners are no longer practising or have interim restrictions in place.

Advertising audit

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency
National Boards

GPO Box 9958 Melbourne VIC 3001 Ahpra.gov.au 1300 419 495

Ahpra and the National Boards regulate these registered health professions: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice, Chinese medicine, chiropractic, dental, medical, medical radiation practice, midwifery, nursing, occupational therapy, optometry, osteopathy, paramedicine, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry and psychology.

Members noted that Ahpra continues its audit of cosmetic surgery advertising by health practitioners. The targeted audit commenced on 5 September 2022, and as at 14 May 2023, audits had been completed for 62 practitioners. Where advertising is found to be non-compliant, Ahpra is proactively working with health practitioners to provide an opportunity for breaches to be addressed before regulatory action is considered.

Members noted that when the Medical Board's new *Guidelines for registered medical practitioners who advertise cosmetic surgery* commence on 1 July 2023, further targeted audits will occur to assess compliance. Ahpra and the Medical Board will continue to consider stronger regulatory action in response to breaches of the rules.

Members also received an update from Operation Redress on cosmetic surgery advertising. Operation Redress are a consumer advocacy organisation with a particular focus on cosmetic surgery and have been involved in media coverage of cosmetic surgery. Operation Redress have been engaged by Ahpra to support the work of the Cosmetic Surgery Enforcement Unit.

Working with others

Members acknowledged the importance of working with other regulators to maximise improvements to public safety and noted updates on several streams of work underway within the broader system to make cosmetic surgery safer.

For example, members noted that Ahpra has completed initial mapping of the regulators in this space, and their roles and responsibilities, and will be consulting with regulators and jurisdictions to identify any gaps and opportunities for further improvements.

Improvements to the regulation of non-surgical cosmetic procedures

Members also noted that in addition to the work to implement the recommendations of the independent review, Ahpra and National Boards are also undertaking work in relation to the regulation of non-surgical cosmetic procedures. Specifically, members noted that in April 2023, the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) published its updated *Position statement on nurses and cosmetic medical procedures*.

Members noted that Ahpra and National Boards will consult and continue to keep the Oversight Group and stakeholders updated as work in this area progresses.

Title protection Bill before the Queensland Parliament

Members received a briefing about the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023* which has been introduced into the Queensland Parliament and is being scrutinised by the Parliament's Health and Environment Committee. Members noted that the aims of the amendments are to protect the title 'surgeon' within the medical profession, safeguard the public and strengthen the regulation of cosmetic surgery in Australia.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the Oversight Group will be held on **25 August 2023**.

More information

More information about Ahpra and National Board's efforts to make cosmetic surgery safer can be found on Ahpra's dedicated [Cosmetic surgery hub](#).

Questions about work of the Oversight Group may be directed to the secretariat via email to: ahpra.secretariat@ahpra.gov.au.

Members

Members of the Oversight Group are:

Ms Delia Rickard
Ms Gill Callister PSM
Adj Prof Veronica Casey AM
Prof Anne Duggan

Dr Paul Harrison

Ms Elizabeth Koff AM
Adj Assoc Prof Sophie Scott
Dr Anne Tonkin AO
Prof Euan Wallace AM

Independent Chair
Chair, Ahpra Board
Chair, Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia
Chief Executive Officer, Australian Commission on Safety and
Quality in Health Care
Unit Chair of Marketing and Consumer Behaviour, and Master of
Business Administration Director, Deakin University
Managing Director, Telstra Health
Health Reporter
Chair, Medical Board of Australia
Secretary, Department of Health, Victoria