

Quick guide to the non-surgical cosmetic procedures public consultation

Who we are

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) and National Boards¹ are working together to ensure the community has access to a safe health workforce regulated under the [National Registration and Accreditation Scheme](#) (the National Scheme). Public protection is our number one priority.

What we do

One of our core regulatory functions is to develop standards, codes, and guidelines for the regulated health professions. These documents help protect the public by setting standards for registered health practitioners. More information about our regulatory functions is on the [Ahpra website](#).

Why we consult?

Your feedback helps us get important information from different groups, including registered health practitioners and the public, about the work we do and helps us to get a better understanding of people's expectations, concerns, and perspectives.

What is the consultation about?

Building on the recent reforms to the [regulation of cosmetic surgery](#), we are now turning our focus to reforming the regulation of registered health practitioners who work in the non-surgical cosmetic procedures sector in Australia to improve practice and standards, improve public safety, and provide opportunities for more informed consumer choice.²

The non-surgical cosmetic procedures sector has unique features that increase public risk, including:

- a lack of clear information about the qualifications and experience of practitioners in the sector
- advertising that minimises the risk and complexity of a procedure or implies unrealistic results
- high numbers of young and potentially vulnerable³ people seeking the procedures
- generating demand and 'upselling' procedures and products
- financial gain competing with and sometimes outweighing patient wellbeing and safety
- ongoing cost and frequency of procedures required by patients to maintain outcomes.

¹ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioner, Chinese Medicine, Chiropractic, Dental, Medical, Nursing and Midwifery, Occupational Therapy, Optometry, Osteopathy, Paramedicine, Pharmacy, Physiotherapy, Podiatry and Psychology Boards of Australia.

² <https://www.ahpra.gov.au/Resources/Cosmetic-surgery-hub/Information-for-the-public/Injectables.aspx>

³ Information on consumer vulnerability is available in the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's (ACCC) publication *Consumer vulnerability: A business guide to the Australian Consumer Law (2021)*, available at www.accc.gov.au.

What are we consulting on?

We are consulting on three documents related to the regulation of registered health practitioners who perform and who advertise non-surgical cosmetic procedures:

1. **Draft Guidelines for nurses who perform non-surgical cosmetic procedures (nurses practice guidelines).** These guidelines reflect the separate roles and scope of practice of enrolled nurses, registered nurses and nurse practitioners in the non-surgical cosmetic procedures sector. They are based on the Draft Guidelines for registered health practitioners who perform non-surgical cosmetic procedures (shared practice guidelines).
2. **Draft Guidelines for registered health practitioners who perform non-surgical cosmetic procedures (shared practice guidelines).** These guidelines will apply to all registered health practitioners who perform non-surgical cosmetic procedures except registered medical practitioners and nurses who will have profession specific guidance.
3. **Draft Guidelines for registered health practitioners who advertise non-surgical cosmetic procedures (advertising guidelines).** These guidelines will apply to all registered health practitioners who advertise non-surgical cosmetic procedures.

What are the key issues

The proposed guidelines are intended to increase public safety in those areas of non-surgical cosmetic practice and advertising where there may be increased public risk. For example, the draft guidelines will set standards in relation to:

Practice	Advertising
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Patient assessment, including psychological screening• Additional responsibilities for patients under the age of 18• Informed consent, including informed financial consent and consent for use of images• Prescribing and administering prescription only cosmetic injectables• Provision of appropriate post-procedure care• Information about complaints mechanisms available• Requirements for facilities where procedures are performed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Claims about expertise and qualifications• Financial and other incentives• Use of testimonials• Social media influencers and ambassadors• Use of images including 'before and after' images, and not using images of people under 18 years• Risk, recovery and idealising non-surgical cosmetic procedures• Body image• Realistic expectations of outcomes• Targeting people potentially at risk.

How to give feedback

Feedback can be provided by:

- completing the online survey or
- by email to AHpra.consultation@ahpra.gov.au using the submission template form provided.

The same set of consultation questions are asked in the online survey and the submission template form, so you only need to provide feedback by one method. Both methods pose specific questions for feedback as well as an opportunity for additional comments.⁴

Consultation is open for 10 weeks and the closing date for submissions is **2 February 2024**.

⁴ Note that the survey or template form are not avenues for making a complaint about a practitioner. Anyone wishing to make a complaint about a registered health practitioner providing non-surgical cosmetic procedures can call Ahpra's Cosmetic Surgery Hotline – 1300 361 041 or lodge a notification online via the [Ahpra website](#).