

## FAQs for dental practitioners - public consultation

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November 2023

### Guidelines for non-surgical cosmetic procedures

#### Introduction

Ahpra and the National Boards, including the Dental Board of Australia (the Board), are consulting on draft practice and advertising guidelines for non-surgical cosmetic procedures. The multi-profession approach ensures that all practitioners providing and advertising non-surgical cosmetic procedures are required to meet the same standards of care.

The public consultation is an opportunity to provide feedback on the guidelines.

These frequently asked questions (FAQs) have been developed specifically for dental practitioners to assist in understanding why the Board is developing guidelines and how they may impact dental practitioners.

#### Why is the Board consulting on guidelines when it already has fact sheets about Botox, dermal fillers and teeth whitening?

The Board's primary purpose is to protect the public. The Board does this by ensuring that Australia's dental practitioners are suitably trained, qualified and safe to practise.

Through the work to reform cosmetic surgery practice and advertising we know that there is concern about non-surgical cosmetic procedures. Building on the reforms to the [regulation of cosmetic surgery](#), there is now an opportunity to focus on ensuring health practitioners who work in the non-surgical cosmetic procedures sector are doing so safely. There is also an opportunity to provide clarity for consumers considering non-surgical cosmetic procedures about the standards expected of practitioners.

To provide consistency for both health practitioners and the public, the proposed guidelines have been informed by, and have been drafted as much as possible to align with the Medical Board's practice guidelines and cosmetic surgery advertising guidelines.

The guidelines will help set the standards for registered health practitioners who perform and advertise non-surgical cosmetic procedures. This may increase the expectations of practitioners performing and advertising non-surgical cosmetic procedures that go beyond the advice currently provided in the Board's fact sheets.

#### Does this mean that as a dental practitioner I can offer Botulism Toxin and dermal fillers to my patients?

The Board expects dental practitioners to only provide dental treatments for which they are educated and trained, and in which they are competent.

The Board's [Scope of practice registration standard](#), associated guidelines and [Code of conduct](#) apply to all areas of practice, including for dental practitioners that perform non-surgical cosmetic procedures. The Code of conduct makes clear that practitioners must put the needs of patients first.

The Board's [Know your scope hub](#) may assist you in evaluating your scope of practice to determine whether you have the knowledge, skills and competence to work in the sector.

Dental practitioners must also comply with any relevant state and territory laws and regulations that may apply. This includes drugs and poisons legislation in the state and/or territory in which you practice.

It is your responsibility to ensure you meet the requirements of all state and territory legislation relevant to your practice, including when prescribing, administering, storing and supplying drugs and poisons.

### **Some of the care I provide may lead to changes to aesthetics or appearance. Will the guidelines apply in these instances?**

The draft guidelines make clear that surgery and procedures that have a clinical justification and that may also lead to improvement in appearance are excluded from the definition of non-surgical cosmetic procedures. In these instances, the guidelines would not be applicable.

Practitioners are still required to comply with the Board's Code of conduct, and any other laws, standards or codes that may be applicable (e.g. drugs and poisons legislation, the Board's [Code of conduct](#)).

### **Can the Board take action if I am not compliant with the Guidelines?**

Section 41 of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (the National Law) states that an approved registration standard, or a code or guideline approved by a National Board is admissible in proceedings under this Law or a law of a co-regulatory jurisdiction against a practitioner registered by the Board as evidence of what constitutes appropriate professional conduct or practice for the profession.

If a health practitioner's professional conduct varies significantly from an approved guideline, the practitioner should be prepared to explain and justify their decisions and actions. Serious or repeated failure to meet guidelines approved by the Board may have consequences for a health practitioner's registration.

### **When will the guidelines come into effect?**

The National Boards and Ahpra are consulting on the guidelines. The feedback provided from the consultation process will be considered and changes to the guidelines may be made.

The Board will advise practitioners when any decision is made and when any guideline will come into effect. The Board alerts practitioners through its website, newsletter, social media and by working with professional bodies and stakeholders to promote any changes.

### **How can I provide feedback?**

We welcome feedback from organisations, registered health practitioners and the public.

Submissions can be made via an [online survey](#) or using the [template provided](#) and emailing to [AhpraConsultation@ahpra.gov.au](mailto:AhpraConsultation@ahpra.gov.au). Both methods pose specific questions for feedback as well as an opportunity for additional comments.

The same set of consultation questions are asked in the online survey and the submission template form, so you only need to submit via one method.

We invite you to provide feedback on any or all the following draft guidelines:

1. *Guidelines for nurses who perform non-surgical cosmetic procedures* (NMBA practice guidelines) – Not applicable to dental practitioners
2. *Guidelines for registered health practitioners who perform non-surgical cosmetic procedures* (shared practice guidelines) – Applicable to dental practitioner that perform non-surgical cosmetic procedures
3. *Guidelines for registered health practitioners who advertise non-surgical cosmetic procedures* (shared non-surgical cosmetic advertising guidelines). - Applicable to all practitioners that perform non-surgical cosmetic procedures