

March 31, 2023

## ENDORSEMENT MODEL WILL PROTECT COSMETIC SURGICAL PATIENTS

The Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery and Medicine (ACCSM) welcomes the forthcoming release of the Australian Medical Council (AMC)'s standards for accreditation of cosmetic surgery programs.

The standards are part of the 'endorsement model' and the practitioners who meet this high standard will be endorsed as having an extended scope of practice in the area of cosmetic surgery.

It is the first time such a standard has been recommended specifically for cosmetic surgery. The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) adopted the endorsement model last year after approval from Health Ministers for its implementation.

**Stakeholders contributing to the AMC's development of the standards for cosmetic surgery included ACCSM, the Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS), the Australasian Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons (ASAPS), and the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS), among others.**

"The College has worked to support the Medical Board of Australia as they take the necessary steps to improve patient safety in Australia," ACCSM President, Dr Anoop Rastogi, said.

"Both demand and supply for cosmetic surgery is increasing. The 'endorsement model' introduces rigorous standards for cosmetic surgical training in Australia. It will make it easier for patients to make informed decisions, by consulting a public database that lists practitioners with AMC-accredited training in cosmetic surgery," Dr Rastogi said.

"Current training for Surgical Fellows of the ACCSM requires a medical degree and a minimum of five years of surgical training, including a mandatory two years of ACCSM-dedicated cosmetic surgical training and examinations."

The AMC is the national standards and assessment body for medicine, ensuring that standards of education, training, and assessment of the medical profession promote and protect Australians.

It has independently set standards for every level of medical training, from medical schools to specialist surgical training programs, but **this is the first time the AMC has prescribed rigorous training standards specifically for cosmetic surgery, which until now did not exist in any surgical training program in Australia.**

**The Area of Practice Endorsement in Cosmetic Surgery will ensure doctors are properly trained, accredited, and endorsed to perform cosmetic surgery, by:**

- Setting a high standard of surgical training *specifically* in cosmetic surgery
- Requiring all doctors who wish to practise cosmetic surgery meet this standard before they can be ‘endorsed’ to perform cosmetic surgery (under Section 98 of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law)
- Facilitating a list of endorsed doctors which will be maintained and published, for the public to reference when choosing their practitioner.

**The endorsement model is a pragmatic solution that is practical, sensible, enforceable. Patient safety is the only priority of this model.**

**NOTE FOR EDITORS:**

**Table 1:** There are three types of registered medical practitioners currently performing cosmetic surgery in Australia:

Group	Type of practitioner	Approximate no. in Australia	Details of training
1	<b>Cosmetic surgeon</b> (ACCSM Fellow)	50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor of Medicine &amp; Surgery 4-6 years</li> <li>• 5 years postgraduate training/experience, including minimum 3 years accredited surgical training in non-cosmetic posts.</li> <li>• <b>Mandatory 2 years ACCSM dedicated cosmetic surgical training &amp; examination</b></li> </ul>
2	<b>Plastic surgeon</b> (RACS Fellow)	500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor of Medicine &amp; Surgery 4-6 years</li> <li>• 3 years basic training/experience</li> <li>• 5 years postgraduate reconstructive surgical training/experience</li> <li>• <b>Optional 6 months dedicated cosmetic surgical training</b></li> <li>• May or may not obtain further <i>voluntary</i> cosmetic surgical training after qualification as a plastic surgeon</li> <li>• FRACS plastic surgery qualification determined by the Australian Medical Council (the specialist regulator) to have ‘<i>a deficit</i>’ in experience of aesthetic surgery and ‘<i>a gap in this area of practice</i>’</li> </ul>
3	<b>Cosmetic surgeon</b> (non-ACCSM Fellow)  Examples: RACGP general practitioner, non-RACGP general practitioner, other such as FRACS non-plastic surgery.	Unknown, but there are 31,000 registered medical practitioners in Australia <sup>1</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor of Medicine &amp; Surgery 4-6 years</li> <li>• Variable postgraduate training/experience</li> <li>• May or may not have basic or advanced generalised surgical training/experience.</li> <li>• <b>Zero dedicated cosmetic surgical training &amp; examination leading to Fellowship in Australia</b></li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/doctors-and-specialists/in-australia#:~:text=In%20Australia%2C%20in%202020%2C%20there,31%2C000%20were%20general%20practitioners%20\(GPs\)](https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/doctors-and-specialists/in-australia#:~:text=In%20Australia%2C%20in%202020%2C%20there,31%2C000%20were%20general%20practitioners%20(GPs))

## **Media enquiries**

Courtney Robinson  
0493 277 576  
[crobinson@apollo.sydney](mailto:crobinson@apollo.sydney)

Vanessa Puli  
0416 623 377  
[vpuli@apollo.sydney](mailto:vpuli@apollo.sydney)

## **About the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery & Medicine**

Established as the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery in 1999, the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery & Medicine (ACCSM) is a not-for-profit, multi-disciplinary fellowship-based body of cosmetic surgeons, cosmetic physicians, plastic surgeons, general surgeons, maxillofacial surgeons, ear nose and throat surgeons, ophthalmologists and other doctors and health care practitioners who practice in cosmetic medicine and surgery. The primary goal of the ACCSM is to ensure the safe provision of cosmetic medical and cosmetic surgical procedures to the Australian community through the supply of appropriately trained and certified health care practitioners. The ACCSM is the only medical college which provides education and training leading to fellowship specifically in cosmetic medicine and surgery. Fellows of the College are medical doctors who have completed post-graduate education and training and demonstrated competency specifically in cosmetic medicine and surgery. For additional information about the ACCSM, please visit: <http://www.accsm.org.au/>

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