

6 September, 2021

Media Release

ERRORS, OMISSIONS AND MISREPRESENTATIONS

Senate Inquiry submissions provided by the Australasian Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons (ASAPS) and Operation Redress (OR) contain errors of fact, omission, and misrepresentation. A summary of key rebuttals from the peak body of cosmetic surgery and medicine, the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery and Medicine (ACCSM, College) is provided below. The submissions are available:

https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/AHPRA/Submissions

Claim #1: Those who seek cosmetic surgery risk their lives at the hands of operators without specialist training and use the title ‘cosmetic surgeon’.

Fact #1: Neither specialist training nor registration in Australia has any bearing whatsoever upon training in cosmetic surgery. What is critical are essential training, qualifications, competency and recertification in cosmetic surgery, so that consumer confusion is eliminated, allowing the identification of competent, safe practitioners.

Claim #2: This persistent dereliction by AHPRA has exposed patients to serious injury...and... death.

Fact #2: There are numerous cases of serious injury to patients undergoing cosmetic surgery at the hands of surgeons, including plastic surgeons, untrained in cosmetic surgery. To date, the only known death of a patient undergoing cosmetic surgery in Australia due to surgical error was at the hands of a plastic surgeon.

Claim #3: AHPRA needs to fulfill its obligations under the National Law and impose penalties on those who incorrectly use the title ‘cosmetic surgeon’.

Fact #3: Cosmetic surgery is not recognised as a medical specialty. ‘Cosmetic Surgeon’ is not a protected title under the National Law.

Claim #4: When the ACCSM refers to its members it creates an illusion that its members have been comprehensively trained in cosmetic surgery...and those same members possess specialist, if not superior, skills in cosmetic surgery...

Fact #4: ACCSM Fellows *are* comprehensively trained in cosmetic surgery. The goal of the College is to ensure the safe provision of cosmetic medicine and cosmetic surgical procedures.



Claim #5: Cosmetic surgeons have shown self-regulation is out of the question.

Fact #5: The ACCSM supports regulation to protect consumers from practitioners calling themselves cosmetic surgeons without essential training, qualifications and recertification and accordingly, has proposed a competency-based National Accreditation Standard for cosmetic surgery.

Claim #6: Due diligence on registrations and memberships seems to be inadequate.

Fact #6: The College has a robust complaints mechanism in place to address any complaint of improper conduct and initiated the Code of Practice subsequently approved by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) in 2009.

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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. To become an ACCSM Surgical Fellow, doctors must typically complete a minimum of 12 years of dedicated surgical education and training. To become an ACCSM Medical Fellow, doctors must typically complete a minimum of 7 years dedicated medical education and training. For additional information about the ACCSM, please visit: <http://www.accsm.org.au/>