



ACCS promotion

CHOOSE WISELY



WHEN IT COMES TO COSMETIC PROCEDURES, CHOICE SHOULDN'T BE BASED ON CHANCE, SAYS **DR JOHN FLYNN**, CEO OF THE AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF COSMETIC SURGERY.

There is a revolution happening in cosmetic medicine. New techniques, improved technology and pharmacological innovations have increased consumer demand. The availability of cosmetic medicine is no longer restricted to the very affluent; for Australians it is a widely available and sought after service – it has gone from Beverly Hills to Baulkham Hills.

Cosmetic physicians and surgeons now have an increasingly rich palette of procedures and treatments from which to choose when addressing each of their patient's individual needs.

◀ Instead of a “one size fits all” approach, it is now easier to customise treatment to the individual in order to achieve a more natural-looking result ▶

Instead of a ‘one size fits all’ approach, it is now easier to customise treatment to the individual in order to achieve a more natural-looking result. Patients want a ‘natural’ outcome, not a plastic overdone look.

The revolution in cosmetic medical practice is creating many more choices, but it is just as important that the information revolution keep pace.

With the increasing array of choices, there is an added responsibility to ensure that treatment decisions are as informed as possible. Patients should seek, and doctors must provide, all the information necessary to make sure expectations are realistic and risks are understood.

The first important step to a successful result is to make the right choices – about the patient's choice of doctor and the recommended treatment.

To help ensure this happens, the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery has established a Code of Practice, which was authorised by the Australian Competition Commission. It was the first such medical college code to receive authorisation since the ACCC began authorising voluntary codes of conduct in 2003. All members of the College are bound by the Code's provisions.

Medical practice is undoubtedly one of the most

regulated of all professions. Members must already comply with numerous laws, regulations and ethical standards from government and medical bodies.

And many may wonder why the College would seek to introduce more apparent regulation as well as subject itself and its members to greater scrutiny. Why introduce yet more rules? The answer is simple: to benefit patients.

The Code of Practice does this in several ways but primarily by encouraging a ‘best practice’ approach to the provision of information so patients may make better informed decisions about their cosmetic care – informed consent as the name implies.

The College's Code of Practice also seeks to help prevent doctors making decisions under pressure or being influenced by inducements. The Code does this by prohibiting doctors from accepting commissions from credit providers and disallows offers of gifts or other inducements, such as time-sensitive discounts periods.

Under the Code, College doctors provide a brochure to their patients, entitled *Things You Should Know*. If you are considering a cosmetic procedure, make sure you get a copy of the brochure. It will help you to ask the right questions when you see your doctor. It also suggests some important questions you should ask yourself and provides useful tips on what to do should you not feel satisfied with the results of your cosmetic procedure.

◀ With the increasing array of choices, there is an added responsibility to ensure that treatment decisions are as informed as possible ▶

A copy of the patient information brochure can also be viewed from the College's homepage: www.accs.org.au

The most important thing to keep in mind when deciding whether or not to have a cosmetic procedure is that you should be completely satisfied that all of your questions and concerns are answered and that you are completely comfortable with your decision. It is, after all, your body and your decision. **acsm**