



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **COSMETIC SURGEONS CALL FOR AN END TO SCALPEL WARS**

The Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery (ACCS) has asked the peak Doctors body to mediate in a professional rivalry that has the potential to alarm patients.

“The Australian Medical Association has been asked to step in and act as honest broker between our members, the College of Surgeons and the Association of Plastic Surgeons, with wild accusations being made about qualifications and experience on all sides”, said Dr John Flynn, the CEO of the College.

The scalpel wars began over accusations that some doctors are performing cosmetic surgery, even though they are not qualified to do so.

Cosmetic surgeons spend six years in medical training to become a doctor. They then have to have a minimum of another five years after graduation and a minimum of three years in approved basic surgical training. In cosmetic surgery doctors then spend two years EXTRA time in training especially for cosmetic surgery.

The ACCS comprises Surgical Fellows, fully qualified and accredited by the College, who can perform invasive surgery, and Medical Fellows, who practice non-surgical cosmetic procedures such as Skin Cancer, Scar treatment, Laser and light-based therapies. But some Medical Fellows also do surgical work, outside the College’s guidelines, and this is what has attracted outside criticism.

“This is true, we strongly disapprove of this, and we have supported the call for rigorous distinction between which of our members are or are not accredited to perform cosmetic surgery”, Dr Flynn added. To this end the ACCS has:

- Written to each of its members to remind them that they will only be endorsed to perform the procedures for which they are qualified by the College.
- Revamped its website so that potential clients can easily identify which members are qualified for which procedures. The website also highlights exactly what questions clients should ask their doctors in great detail.

“Many of our Fellows are also members of the College of Surgeons and the Plastics Surgeons Association. But modern cosmetic surgery is now widely recognized as having many areas of specialization, which is what our college trains, reviews, and monitors with rigorous annual audits of our members qualifications”

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