



The Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery

Raising Standards, Protecting Patients

Media statement

2 October 2020

To be attributed to Patrick Tansley, President of the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery

The Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery (ACCS, College) understands Les Blackstock had his registration cancelled under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law by the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Commonly referred to as a 'cosmetic surgeon' he was a registered medical practitioner but never a Fellow of the ACCS.

Dr Ron Bezic, Censor in Chief and past President of the ACCS gave expert evidence to the Tribunal in this matter.

The case highlights an issue the College has been campaigning upon for some time. The College wants the Australian Health Minister to bring together the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery, the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, state ministerial colleagues and other stakeholders to develop a national accreditation system in cosmetic surgery to provide better and safer outcomes for patients.

At this time, there is no nationally accredited and easily recognisable system for patients seeking cosmetic surgery to know whether or not they are in safe hands as any medical practitioner may call for himself or herself a 'cosmetic surgeon'.

Given there is no agreed method of accreditation of practitioners performing cosmetic surgical procedures in Australia, selecting an appropriately qualified surgeon for cosmetic surgery can therefore be a complete lottery for patients. It is fundamentally for this reason why patients and regulators find it difficult to distinguish between surgeons competent in cosmetic surgery from those who do not have appropriate knowledge, training, and skills to undertake and deliver high-quality cosmetic surgical outcomes.

The ACCS considers that only doctors who are trained and have reached a recognised competency standard in cosmetic surgery should be allowed to call themselves a 'cosmetic surgeon'. In addition, contemporary recognition of cosmetic surgery as a speciality in its own right would incorporate a multitude of natural professional safeguards to patients.

The ACCS' proposal to establish a National Accreditation System for all doctors undertaking cosmetic procedures including medical practitioners of all surgical backgrounds would ultimately provide better and safer patient outcomes without favouring any particular professional craft group.



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Table 1: Types of practitioners performing cosmetic surgery in Australian in 2020

	Type of practitioner	Minimum years of training	Detail
1	Cosmetic surgeon (ACCS Fellow)	12 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Medicine/Surgery 4-6 years • 5 years postgraduate surgery experience • Mandatory 2 years ACCS dedicated cosmetic surgery training
2	Plastic surgeon (RACS Fellow and Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) Member)	12 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Medicine/Surgery 4-6 years • 5 years postgraduate surgery experience • Optional six months ASPS dedicated cosmetic surgery training
3	General practitioner (RACGP Fellow)	7-11 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Medicine/Surgery 4-6 years • 3-5 years postgraduate study • Zero dedicated cosmetic surgery training
4	Registered medical practitioner	5-7 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Medicine/Surgery 4-6 years • 1 year internship • Zero dedicated cosmetic surgery training
5	Fly in fly out practitioner with no qualifications	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero dedicated cosmetic surgery training

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About the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery

Established in 1999, the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery (ACCS) 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 ACCS is to ensure the safe provision of cosmetic medicine and cosmetic surgical procedures to the Australian community through the supply of appropriately trained and certified health care practitioners. The ACCS 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 ACCS Surgical Fellow, doctors must typically complete a minimum of 12 years of medical and surgical education and training. For additional information about the ACCS, please visit: <http://www.accs.org.au/>