

Cosmetic Surgery

How cosmetic surgery is affected by changes to legislation

Key messages

- As of 1 July 2018, it is illegal for healthcare providers to conduct surgery in an unregistered facility.
- As of 1 July 2018, It is illegal to perform liposuction in an unregistered facility (small touch-ups of up to 200ml of lipoaspirate may be removed in facilities that are not registered)
- As of 1 July 2018, it is illegal for healthcare providers to administer anaesthesia and IV sedation (as defined) in an unregistered facility.

Why did the regulations change?

The Regulations that govern private health facilities in Victoria were changed to ensure better safety and quality of care for patients. The regulations require services that have risks associated with them be provided in a registered facility. By requiring these procedures to be undertaken in registered facilities, the Department of Health and Human Services is able to monitor the safety and quality of care being provided.

How do the changes to the regulations affect me if I want to have cosmetic surgery?

All surgery must be provided in a registered facility. There are many cosmetic procedures that clearly meet the definition of surgery. These include, but are not limited to: abdominoplasty, belt lipectomy, biceps implants, brachioplasty, breast augmentation or reduction, buttock augmentation, reduction or lift, calf implants, deltoid implants, facial implants that involve inserting an implant on the bone or surgical exposure to deep tissue, mastopexy or mastopexy augmentation, neck lift, pectoral implants, penis augmentation, rhinoplasty (nose), superficial musculoaponeurotic system facelift (SMAS facelift), triceps implants, and vaginoplasty.

How do the changes to regulations affect me if I want to have liposuction?

Liposuction must be undertaken in a facility that is registered with the Department of Health and Human Services. The Regulations allow for a very small amount (200ml of lipoaspirate in total) to be removed in unregistered facilities. This is a very small amount as lipoaspirate includes not only the fat but also the fluid injected into the area for the procedure. This allows for small touch ups at post procedure consultations. It is not intended that the amount of 200mls allow for initial procedures to be undertaken in unregistered facilities.

What is meant by anaesthesia and IV sedation?

In Victoria, it is illegal to provide anaesthesia in an unregistered facility. Anaesthesia includes intravenous sedation and anything more than local anaesthetic.

What should I do if I suspect illegal activity or have further questions?

To report suspected illegal activity or for further queries regarding liposuction, cosmetic surgery or anaesthesia in Victoria, contact the Department of Health and Human Services, Private Hospitals Unit on 9096.2164 or email privatehospitals@dhhs.vic.gov.au.