



MEDIA RELEASE – 20 October 2017

ASPS welcome tighter regulation of cosmetic surgery in Queensland

The Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) has welcomed the introduction of new regulations designed to provide greater protection for people undergoing cosmetic surgery and hopes it provides momentum for nationally-consistent regulations across all states.

In Queensland an increased list of cosmetic procedures such as breast augmentations, high volume liposuction, labioplasties, face lifts and abdomnioplasties (tummy tucks) will, from January 2018, only be able to be performed in licensed private health facilities that are appropriately staffed and equipped to deal with the risks associated with these surgeries.

“Currently these procedures are often performed in unlicensed, office-based premises not subject to the same standards and regulations imposed on hospitals and day procedure centres. This has presented an unacceptable risk to patient safety,” says ASPS President, Professor Mark Ashton.

“Specialist Plastic Surgeons in Queensland report patients complaining about surgery they have had in unregistered facilities with inadequate anaesthesia, pain relief and blood pressure control.

“It is critically important that any surgery be performed in a sterile and safe environment with appropriately trained staff, and safe sedation.

“Sadly it has taken some tragic, high-profile events for the community to realise that cosmetic surgery is not trivial and patients undergoing cosmetic surgery procedures should be afforded the same protections as patients undergoing any other type of invasive surgery. Any surgery, be it cardiac or cosmetic, involves an element of risk and should be taken seriously.

“In other states we have seen what can go wrong with patients placed in life-threatening situations where either intravenous sedation and/or potentially toxic doses of local anaesthetic have been administered in unlicensed premises.

“Patients have suffered cardiac arrests and there was the recent death death of a woman in an unlicensed facility in Sydney.

“We are heartened that some state governments are now tightening their laws but their success will depend on rigorous checks and enforcement. Ultimately we would like to see nationally-consistent regulation across all states that provides equal protections to patients no matter where they live,” says Professor Ashton.

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Founded in 1970, the Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons Inc (ASPS) is the peak body for Specialist Plastic Surgeons (both reconstructive and cosmetic). Its mission is to provide the highest quality plastic surgery care to all Australians.