



Guidance note: Cosmetic nursing practice

1. Context

Cosmetic procedures are an expanding service area. Nurses working in this area perform an integral role in assisting medical practitioners and may also undertake some procedures, including cosmetic injections, as part of their practice.

2. Purpose

This guidance note aims to help nurses working in this setting to reduce and manage their exposure to risk.

3. Key definitions

Cosmetic procedures: a variety of surgical techniques and procedures, including facelift, eyelid surgery, body contouring, dermabrasion, laser skin resurfacing, implants, liposuction, and cosmetic injections, such as injections of botulinum toxin Type A or soft tissue dermal fillers.

4. Guidance

4.1 Regulatory framework - general

All nurses in Victoria must practice in accordance with the [Health Practitioner Regulation National Law \(Victoria\) Act 2009](#).

Nurses who practice cosmetic nursing must comply with all relevant Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) practice and registration standards, codes and guidelines including:

- [Registered nurse standards for practice](#)
- [Code of conduct for nurses](#)
- [Decision-making framework for nursing and midwifery](#)

4.2 Guidelines for cosmetic nursing

Nurses practicing in cosmetic nursing should also be familiar with:

- the [NMBA Position statement on nurses and cosmetic procedures](#)
- the Medical Board of Australia's [Guidelines for registered medical practitioners who perform cosmetic medical and surgical procedures](#) and associated requirements for prescribing schedule 4 medicines
- the [AHPRA guidelines for advertising regulated health services](#)
- [Health Services Act 1988 \(Vic\)](#), and regulations of surgery – particularly cosmetic surgery

4.3 Regulatory framework - medications

In relation to medications, nurses should ensure they practice in accordance with:

- the [Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981](#)
- the [Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Regulations 2017](#)
- their organisation's policy and procedures

As part of this compliance, nurses should only administer medicine or treatments to a person who has:

- been comprehensively assessed by a medical practitioner
- been prescribed a medicine or other treatment by an authorised prescriber under Part 3 of the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Regulations 2017

4.4 *Managing risk*

In keeping with the regulations, guidelines and standards of practice:

- employers must:
 - meet legal obligations and standards set out in the *Health Services Act 1988* and the [Health Services \(Health Services Establishments\) Regulations 2013](#)
 - develop local policies and procedures that support nurses and nurse practitioners to practice according to their scope of practice and other compliance obligations
 - ensure all cosmetic surgery is undertaken by a medical practitioner (specialist surgeon) with appropriate training, expertise, and experience to perform the procedure
- nurses should:
 - ensure they are educationally prepared and competent to practice in the area of cosmetic procedures and that they only work within their scope of practice
 - inform their employer immediately if any cosmetic procedure or local policy falls outside their scope of practice
- nurse practitioners who practice cosmetic nursing independently should:
 - develop policies and procedures to guide their practice in accordance with their individual scope of practice

4.5 *Professional indemnity insurance*

Nurses should ensure:

- they are fully aware of the risks of all procedures they perform
- they have professional indemnity insurance that appropriately covers their practice

ANMF (Vic Branch) professional indemnity member insurance **excludes** cosmetic injectables and laser therapy.

5. **ANMF (Vic Branch) support**

For additional advice and support, contact [ANMF Member Assistance](#).

6. **Other useful documents**

[ANMF \(Vic Branch\) Professional Indemnity Insurance](#)

Victoria State Government 2019, [Better Health Channel: Cosmetic procedures](#)

Medical Board of Australia 2016, [Guidelines for registered medical practitioners who perform cosmetic medical and surgical procedure](#)