

Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023

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COPS submission to the
Inquiry into the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law
(Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023

The Council of Procedural Specialists (COPS) has examined the above Bill and draws parliamentarians' attention to the fact that the Bill does not cover non-medical health practitioners using the title "surgeon".

COPS restates its recommendations in regard to the protection of the title surgeon. These recommendations were included in our submission of 13 April 2022 to the "Independent review of the regulation of health practitioners in cosmetic surgery".

Recommendations:

1. Adopt a policy of protecting the title "Surgeon" for use only by those who have achieved an AMC-accredited medical surgical fellowship, namely:
 - a. Fellows of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) and its recognised affiliates, such as the Australian Orthopaedic Association (AOA);
 - b. Fellows of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG);
 - c. Fellows of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO);
 - d. Fellows of the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons (RACDS).
2. Adopt a policy of preventing the use of the title "Surgeon" outside the above settings and hence restore protections that existed in most states prior to NRAS, namely having one AMC-accredited standard of training for anyone who is licensed to undertake surgical interventions into the whole-body system.

In summary, protecting the public by protecting the title surgeon will require further legislative change that prohibits the use of the title surgeon by non-specialty-trained medical practitioners and non-medical health practitioners.

Please do not hesitate to contact COPS should you require further information on this important public safety issue.

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