

## New safety regime proposed for cosmetic clinics

Under new government proposals, cosmetic surgery clinics will be named and shamed if they fail to reach basic standards of care. It is proposed that cosmetic surgery clinic facilities are rated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to help improve their safety.

It has long been a concern that cosmetic procedures are being carried out by unlicensed and inexperienced practitioners. With an increasing number of procedures reportedly going wrong and with incidents such as the PIP breast implant scandal of 2012, the government has been pressed to take action.

In rating cosmetic surgery clinics on their standards of care, the CQC now requires all clinics to register their services with them. The CQC will regulate any treatment that requires equipment or an instrument to be inserted into the body – this includes laser eye treatment. Where there is no ‘cut’ to the body during treatment, such as in the case of Botox injections, chemical facial peels or laser hair removal, the treatment will not be regulated.

By introducing these regulations, the CQC aim to ensure that all cosmetic surgery practitioners are skilled and experienced in their field, that they offer full consultations to all patients ensuring that they are aware of any possible risks, that the patient’s written consent is obtained by the practitioner who will be administering the treatment and that full indemnity insurance is in place. The regulations will see an end to limited time discounts and special financial offers.

Patients who are considering cosmetic surgery will now be able to find out the quality of care offered by the clinic that they have chosen. This is particularly prevalent with laser eye surgery clinics, given a recent increase in negligence claims.

Deborah Blythe, partner and head of the personal injury and clinical negligence team, comments *“In recent years we have seen a rise in negligence claims resulting from a lack of transparency and regulation in the cosmetic surgery sector. The new regulations stand to help a great number of people considering cosmetic surgery”*.

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