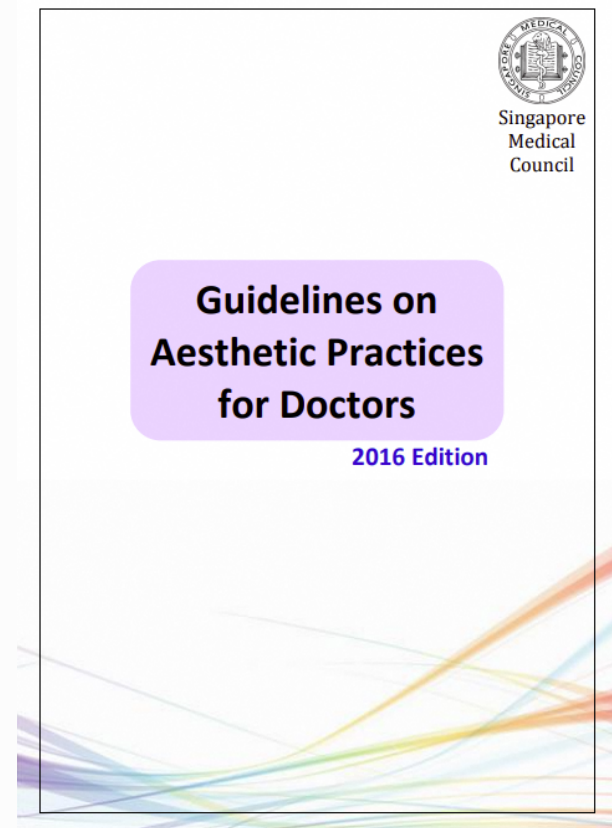


## Series in Professional Ethics

# Compliance with the 2016 Guidelines on Aesthetic Practices for Doctors

The SMC would like to remind all registered medical practitioners that strict compliance with the 2016 Guidelines on Aesthetic Practices for Doctors (2016 Guidelines) is required if they are involved in aesthetic practice.

Regardless of specialty, all medical practitioners must fulfil the relevant criteria. They must have performed the requisite number of aesthetic procedures between 1 October 2006 to 30 September 2008; or obtained the relevant Certificate of Competence specified in either Table 1 or Table 2 of the 2016 Guidelines as applicable to them.



The Guidelines on Aesthetic Practices for Doctors was first developed by the Academy of Medicine, Singapore, the College of Family Physicians, Singapore and the Singapore Medical Council in July 2008 and updated in October 2008 (2008 Guidelines) to provide a framework for doctors who perform aesthetic procedures under appropriate regulatory oversight.

*Aesthetic practice represents...Operations and other procedures that revise or change the appearance, colour, texture, structure, or position of bodily features, which most would consider otherwise to be within the broad range of 'normal' for that person.*



To stay abreast with newer developments and emerging trends in aesthetic procedures, a Working Committee was appointed in January 2014 to review the 2008 Guidelines to advise on the standards for aesthetic practices and make recommendations.

The revised 2016 Guidelines came into effect on 1 August 2016 and superseded the 2008 Guidelines. A circular was published on 5 August 2021 to remind doctors of the need to pay heed to the Guidelines.

As with the 2008 Guidelines, the 2016 Guidelines sets out that aesthetic practice represents an area of practice involving: *“Operations and other procedures that revise or change the appearance, colour, texture, structure, or position of bodily features, which most would consider otherwise to be within the broad range of ‘normal’ for that person.”*

In this regard, the 2016 Guidelines reiterate that aesthetic practice is not regarded as a speciality or sub-specialty of medicine. Doctors performing aesthetic procedures must also ensure that all display and/or use of qualifications, titles or designations for publicity purposes are in accordance with the requirements set out in the provisions of the Medical Registration Act.

Furthermore, the content of any advertisement (especially images) must not be misleading, and they must show that such procedures are carried out in appropriate clinical settings.

Doctors who perform aesthetic procedures should be mindful of the types of aesthetic procedures that they are allowed to perform in Table 1 and Table 2 of the 2016 Guidelines.



For the avoidance of doubt, Table 1 applies to non-specialists and specialists who are not listed in Table 2 while Table 2 only applies to certain specialists as specified.

Medical practitioners who are performing procedures under Table 1 should comply strictly with the Guidelines and listed specialists who did not receive training to perform the procedures in Table 2 should not perform the procedures unless or until they have undergone the requisite training and acquired the necessary experience to perform the procedures competently.

It is recommended that doctors who have been performing aesthetic procedures should have sufficient and appropriate medical malpractice insurance to safeguard patients' interests.

All registered doctors are also advised to keep abreast of medical knowledge relevant to such practice and ensure that their clinical and technical skills are maintained as stated in the SMC Ethical Code and Ethical Guidelines (2016).

For more information on matters relating to aesthetic practice, please refer to the [SMC website](#).