

This response was submitted to the call for evidence issued by the Nuffield Council on Bioethics' Working Party on Cosmetic procedures. Responses were gathered from 11 January to 18 March 2017. The views expressed are solely those of the respondent(s) and not those of the Council.

Bio Law and Ethics Department of Avicenna Research Institute (I.R. Iran)

Questions 1-3

1. What, in your view, counts as a 'cosmetic procedure'?

In first step, whether a procedure has the requirements to be called cosmetic procedure needs to be assessed by one or more given criteria. It seems that upon "health" criteria, including prevention from and treatment of diseases and regenerative procedures, cosmetic procedures are those directly irrelevant to mental or physical health. Cosmetic procedures put more weigh on mental and physical enhancement which reveals two distinctive characteristics: not to be a matter of "necessity" and to be "luxury" or "extravagant". By conducting cosmetic procedure, people refuse to think of health in its precise term.

2. What do you see as the underlying aim of cosmetic procedures (a) from the perspective of those seeking a procedure and (b) from the perspective of those providing procedures? How does this differ for different social groups?

A) People seeking to conduct cosmetic procedures aim to

1. Competing against someone to achieve more attractive and beautiful body
2. Respecting beauty and any procedure to attain it as a moral value
3. Curbing side effects arising out of some treatments or using some drugs

B) Practitioners may also follow aims to conduct cosmetic procedures for

consumers which included but not limited to:

1. Addressing to be beautiful as a justified and natural instinct of human
2. Earning money
3. Unusual and irrational endeavors for making oneself beautiful claim, as they cause to wasting sources (a social harm), to be labeled immoral, no difference we pay to have a luxury model of hair or dress, performing cosmetic surgery or other biomedical measures. Living in real realm, we shall have to find relevant moral responses to human instincts. We cannot extremely behave to respond to our instinct to be beautiful as well as we cannot ignore moral responses to one's sexual behavior. Following this claim,

rational and usual endeavor to make oneself beautiful and performing cosmetic procedures counts moral value, otherwise it leave moral values, as contentment, aside.

Questions 4-8

4. What do you think are the main drivers generating the increasing demand for cosmetic procedures, both surgical and non-surgical?

It seems that main drivers of performing cosmetic procedures can be:

- a. Grading up social status
- b. feeling honor and proud
- c. Social and familial competitions
- d. Hedonism
- e. Stimulating and increasing eroticism of partners
- f. Improving self-confidence

5. Do you think it is becoming more routine to undertake cosmetic procedures? If so, in your view, does this raise any ethical issues?

Yes, pervasiveness of cosmetic procedures gradually makes it as predominant value and culture which may change the cosmetic criteria in any society. Regarding this, People who cannot afford to perform cosmetic procedures due to any reason shall be deprived of social honor and respect as well as self-confidence.

Degrading family status due to couples suffering cosmetic dissatisfaction is the other fateful consequence. Discrimination and degrading family are part of evils which make cosmetic procedures morally unjustified.

Questions 9-15

9. Do you think that people seeking cosmetic procedures are 'patients' or 'consumers', neither, or both?

As receiving cosmetic procedure services not only include beauty interventions, but also some clinical services and considerations that matter after and before the procedures, it seems that they should be counted as patients not consumers. The person (whether they are doctor or not) in providing cosmetic procedures have to always consider some clinical and physical matters, ignorance of which may cause serious dangerous defects on people's health.

The concept of "consumer" usually is companied with the choice to utilize something in the way that a person wants; however the person who is the subject of a cosmetic procedure may not be an appropriate case for procedure according to the clinical

considerations. In such a case they are not consumers as they are not the only deciders on whether to conduct the procedure or not. So in these types of cases people do not have absolute possibility of decision-making unlike consumers.

12. To what extent should parents be allowed to make decisions about cosmetic procedures for their children?

It seems that there should be a distinction before and after the age of seven. Until the age of seven parents should be considered as the main deciders for their children, after the age of seven consent of the child should be considered necessary. In some cases where the procedure has only cosmetic aspects and not related to the health of the child at all clinics and hospitals should have a definite guidelines for themselves according to which some clinical procedures are forbidden for children specially invasive ones. In fact regarding to the invasive cosmetic procedures, there should be some limitations even for parents when the procedure has only cosmetic aspects and not related to the children's health at all.

13. Should there be any guidelines or regulation on who can provide non-surgical cosmetic procedures?

As non-surgical cosmetic may have sever clinical consequences it seems that the possibility to perform non-surgical cosmetic procedures should be regulated, In this way a body can supervise the actions and the situations in which non-surgical cosmetics are done.

Guidelines and regulations are important as the people, clinics and generally everyone who supplies cosmetic procedures can be observed and screened due to the required standards that they have to meet.