
GUIDELINES ON AESTHETIC FACIAL PROCEDURES FOR DENTAL PRACTITIONERS (2020)

INTRODUCTION

1. The Guidelines on Aesthetic Facial Procedures for Dental Practitioners (2020) (“Guidelines AFP 2020”) shall come into effect on 1 February 2020 and supersede that issued in January 2017. The Guidelines AFP 2020 serves as a set of regulatory rules to guide the dental practitioner in the safe practice of aesthetic facial procedures.

2. This document is based on:
 - The Guidelines on Aesthetic Facial Procedures for Dental Practitioners (2013 and 2017 Editions), issued by the Singapore Dental Council
 - The Guidelines on Aesthetic Practices for Doctors (2016 Edition), issued by the Singapore Medical Council
 - Consultation and views of the College of Dental Surgeons, Academy of Medicine, Singapore
 - Consultation and views of the Dental Specialist Accreditation Committee
 - Consultation and views of the Dental Specialist Accreditation Board
 - Consultation and views of the Singapore Dental Council

DEFINITION OF AESTHETIC PRACTICE

3. There is currently no internationally accepted definition of Aesthetic Practice. For the purpose of these guidelines, the definition of Cosmetic Surgery developed by the UK Cosmetic Surgery Interspecialty Committee¹ shall be adopted as the definition for Aesthetic Practice. Hence, Aesthetic Practice is defined as 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.”

¹ This definition was also used by the UK Expert Group on the Regulation of Cosmetic Surgery in its report to the Chief Medical Officer.

DESIGNATION OF AESTHETIC PRACTICE – AN AREA OF PRACTICE NOT A SPECIALTY OR SUBSPECIALTY

4. Aesthetic Practice is not regarded as a specialty or subspecialty. The title of aesthetic oral and maxillofacial surgeon or aesthetic dental surgeon is therefore NOT allowed. All registered dental practitioners are to comply with the Singapore Dental Council (“SDC”)’s Ethical Code and Ethical Guidelines 2018 (“ECEG 2018”), as well as with Section 31 of the Dental Registration Act (Cap. 76) when displaying or using any qualification, title, or designation.
5. A dental practitioner who is an oral and maxillofacial surgeon (“OMS”) registered with the SDC who provides and performs aesthetic facial procedures will still call himself “oral and maxillofacial surgeon”.
6. A dental practitioner who is a general dental practitioner or a dental specialist registered with the SDC in any of the recognised specialties who provides and performs aesthetic facial procedures should still call himself a dental surgeon or general dental practitioner or the respective SDC-approved specialist title without displaying any designation of “aesthetic” or “cosmetic” in conjunction with the title.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

7. Dental practitioners applying for accreditation to perform facial aesthetic procedures must be on full registration and have practised dentistry in Singapore for at least two years, unless exempted by SDC.
8. The guiding principles in any medical treatment must be that it is effective and there is due cognisance given to patient safety. In the context of aesthetic practice, it must go beyond the “Do No Harm” principle and be seen to benefit the patient positively. The dental practitioner must be trained to perform such aesthetic procedures and be able to manage complications that could arise. The oral and maxillofacial surgeon performing invasive aesthetic facial procedures that are beyond the requirement for specialist registration must have received additional training and experience.
9. Under the SDC’s ECEG 2018, dental practitioners are to treat patients according to generally accepted methods². A dental practitioner shall not offer to patients,

² Section 5.1.4 of the Singapore Dental Council’s Ethical Code & Ethical Guidelines 2018.

management plans or remedies that are not generally accepted by the profession, except in the context of a formal and approved clinical trial³.

10. Given that aesthetic practice is an area of practice where the effectiveness of the treatment cannot, at times, be measured objectively (in view that there might be a mismatch between what patients and dental practitioners would regard as a good outcome), dental practitioners must be particularly sensitive to the need to ensure informed consent on the part of the patient and advise patients of side effects and adverse outcomes beyond those that are more common, including disclosing risks that are lower than those required to be disclosed in conventional medicine.

ALLOWED AESTHETIC FACIAL PROCEDURES

11. Dental practitioners are allowed to perform the following aesthetic facial procedures based on their field of practice and training:

- (a) Dental practitioners registered under full registration with the SDC are allowed to perform the following procedures listed in Table 1.

Table 1		
Type of procedure	Appropriate premises	Conditions
Chemical or pressurised gas/liquid peels	Clinic	COC
Botulinum toxin injection	Clinic	COC
Dermal filler injection (restricted to perioral region)	Clinic	COC

- (b) Dental practitioners registered as specialists in oral and maxillofacial surgery (OMS) with the SDC are allowed to perform the following procedures for aesthetic enhancement in the head and neck region, subject to the respective conditions listed in Table 2.

³ Ministry of Health. DMS's Circular to medical practitioners. Aesthetic Practice. 23 March 2008; MOH. MOH clarifies position on aesthetic treatment. Press Release. 23 March 2008.

Table 2		
Procedures requiring certification or proof of relevant training		
Dermal filler injection	Clinic	COC
Intense pulsed light (IPL) for skin rejuvenation	Clinic	AAAM Level 1 certification/equivalent <i>or</i> Proof of relevant surgical training and experience required
Radiofrequency, infra-red, ultrasound and other light-based devices for facial aesthetic enhancement	Clinic	AAAM Level 1 certification/equivalent <i>or</i> Proof of relevant surgical training and experience required
Lasers for pigmentary disorders	Clinic / OT	AAAM Level 1 certification/equivalent <i>or</i> Proof of relevant surgical training and experience required
Lasers for treating vascular disorders	Clinic / OT	AAAM Level 1 certification/equivalent <i>or</i> Proof of relevant surgical training and experience required
Sclerotherapy	Clinic / OT	AAAM ⁴ Level 1 certification/equivalent <i>or</i> Proof of relevant surgical training and experience required
Procedures requiring proof of relevant training		
Blepharoplasty (including double eyelid)	Clinic / OT	Proof of relevant surgical training and experience required
Brow lifts	Clinic / OT	Proof of relevant surgical training and experience required

⁴ AAAM = American Academy of Aesthetic Medicine.

Dermabrasion	Clinic / OT	Proof of relevant surgical training and experience required
Fractional lasers for skin rejuvenation	Clinic / OT	Proof of relevant surgical training and experience required
Free fat grafting (face)	Clinic / OT	Proof of relevant surgical training and experience required.
Hair transplantation	Clinic / OT	Proof of relevant surgical training and experience required.
Otoplasty	Clinic / OT	Proof of relevant surgical training and experience required
Rhinoplasty	Clinic / OT	Proof of relevant surgical training and experience required.
Rhytidectomy	Clinic / OT	Proof of relevant surgical training and experience required
Submental liposuction	Clinic / OT	Proof of relevant surgical training and experience required
Thread lifts	Clinic / OT	Proof of relevant surgical training and experience required

12. These guidelines only apply to procedures done primarily for aesthetic enhancement. For example, botulinum toxin injection for temporomandibular disorders is not considered an aesthetic procedure and is not subject to these guidelines.

APPLICATION FOR PROVISION OF AESTHETIC FACIAL PROCEDURES

13. There is no provision for “grandfathering” in these guidelines. All dental practitioners must apply for approval to perform any aesthetic facial procedure in accordance to the requirements of these guidelines.
14. All dental practitioners must have successfully completed an SDC-approved course, obtained a COC, applied for and received written approval from SDC prior to performing any of the three approved procedures (chemical peels, botulinum toxin injection, and dermal filler injection). Validity of the COC is detailed below at Paragraph 15 to 20.

15. Dental practitioners should ensure that the course used to apply for accreditation of aesthetic facial procedure(s) is in accordance to the requirements stipulated in "Accreditation of courses for Certificate of Competency (COC)" dated 6 July 2015.
16. The initial accreditation to perform any of the three approved procedures (chemical peels, botulinum toxin injection, and dermal filler injection) for all dental practitioners, (whether OMS or non-OMS), shall be for **2 years**.
17. For the subsequent accreditation, all dental practitioners must either submit a logbook of at least 20 cases per procedure or successfully completed a course (other than the one originally used for application of COC) attended within the last 12 months of expiry date. This accreditation shall be for **4 years**.
18. Dental practitioners who wish to apply for reaccreditation after the 2nd accreditation must submit a logbook of at least 20 cases per procedure or successfully completed a course (other than the one originally used for application of COC) attended within the last 12 months of expiry date subject to approval. This 3rd accreditation shall be granted **permanent approval** and the practitioner need not reapply to perform the approved aesthetic facial procedure(s).
19. All OMS must apply to the SDC for approval to perform the procedures listed in these guidelines in accordance with the stipulated requirements and received written approval from SDC prior to performing any aesthetic facial procedures.
20. OMS applying for the respective procedures in Table 2 must provide AAAM certification or equivalent proof of relevant training and experience, the form and structure of which shall be determined by the AFPOC based on the complexity of the procedure and the experience of the applicant.
21. Accreditations may be rescinded upon the Singapore Dental Council's knowledge of his/her conviction by a professional body or court of law in Singapore or elsewhere pertaining to aesthetic facial procedures.

PROCEDURES THAT ARE NOT LISTED IN THESE GUIDELINES

22. Dental practitioners should not perform any aesthetic facial procedures that are not listed in these guidelines. SDC is cognisant of the fact that the list is not comprehensive and that new procedures do emerge over time. The list will be reviewed from time to time and be amended as needed in future.
23. Approval by the SDC to perform aesthetic facial procedures does not amount to an endorsement by the SDC. Dental practitioners remain responsible for their own patients and must limit their scope of work to areas where they are competent in, notwithstanding any approval by the SDC.
24. Any dental practitioner who performs any aesthetic procedure that is not in accordance with these guidelines or any requirements set by the SDC or MOH will be deemed as unethical and bringing disrepute to the profession. Such a dental practitioner may be liable for disciplinary action by the SDC.

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