

Under-18 cosmetic surgery laws need stitching up

July 24 2013

Laws banning cosmetic surgery for Queensland minors will only be effective if the other states also jump on board, a QUT law lecturer has said.

Associate Professor Tina Cockburn said the Cosmetic Physicians Society of Australasia had it right when they, this week, called for tighter government-controlled guidelines about performing surgical procedures on children.

The proposal would bring the rest of the country in line with Queensland, which Professor Cockburn said was the best solution to "jurisdiction shopping".

"When the bill was first passed in Queensland outlawing unnecessary, high-risk and [invasive surgery](#) on children under 18 one of my recommendations was to introduce the same laws across all states - similar to the laws in regard to solarium use," Professor Cockburn said.

"It's not inconceivable that a young Queenslander who is refused surgery can cross the border into New South Wales, for example."

In Queensland a surgeon who performed a tummy tuck, liposuction, face lifts, breast enlargement or reduction, [rhinoplasty](#) (nose job), skin resurfacing or teeth veneer could be fined a maximum of \$150,000 or two years in prison if the surgery was not deemed 'in the best interest of the child's social, psychological or physical benefit'.

The bill does not ban gastric banding, ear surgery (pinning back ears) or body piercing.

However, in New South Wales a child under-18 can undergo these procedures after a three-month cooling off period and a [second opinion](#).

"There is a [balancing act](#) between protecting vulnerable children from invasive, high-risk [cosmetic procedures](#) which they may later regret and respecting a young person's autonomy, but a lack of uniform regulations is not the way forward," Professor Cockburn said.

Provided by Queensland University of Technology

Citation: Under-18 cosmetic surgery laws need stitching up (2013, July 24) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-07-under-cosmetic-surgery-laws.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.