

## INDEPENDENT PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF PATIENTS UNDER 18 REQUESTING COSMETIC SURGERY

### Patient Information Sheet (07DEC18)

#### **1. Why have I been referred for an independent psychological evaluation?**

Your surgeon is required to do so under the Medical Board of Australia guidelines for all patients under the age of 18 requesting a major procedure. You can read these guidelines here <https://www.medicalboard.gov.au/news/2016-05-09-media-statement.aspx>

#### **2. What is the aim and purpose of this evaluation?**

The aim is “to identify any significant underlying psychological problems which may make [the patient] an unsuitable candidate for the procedure”.

These patients are at risk of experiencing dissatisfaction following surgery, and an increase in their psychological symptoms. It is in the patient’s best interests to address any underlying psychological problems *before* surgery.

#### **3. Who conducts the psychological evaluation?**

Dr Luiker is a clinical psychologist who has been working with young people and their families for thirty five years. You can read more about him here <https://www.parksclinic.com/who/dr-henry-g-luiker/>

#### **4. What does the evaluation involve?**

The evaluation takes place over three 50 minute consultations, usually a week apart. The spacing of the sessions is to give you time to reflect. It is not something to be rushed through.

At the first consultation, you will complete a standardised test of personality and psychological problems.

At the second consultation, we will go through a print-out of the test results. This will be a co-operative, non-judgemental, exploratory process aimed at deepening understanding of your motivation for seeking change in your appearance. I have no set view whether cosmetic surgery is “good” or “bad” – our focus is entirely on whether taking this step at this time is good for *you*.

At the third consultation, you will be presented with the report which will be sent to your surgeon. If the evaluation revealed psychological problems that you wish to address, we will discuss your options for referral to a suitable psychologist or psychiatrist. If it is my opinion that we found evidence of significant underlying psychological problems, but you disagree with my opinion, we will discuss how you might get a second independent opinion, if you wish.

### **5. What is the cost of the evaluation?**

The fee for each of the three 50 minute consultations is \$215, my usual fee for a consultation. There is no additional fee for preparation of the report. The total fee of \$645 is payable at the time of booking the evaluation.

### **6. What is the cost if more than three 50 minute consultations are required?**

Sometimes an additional consultation may be necessary.

For example:

Should the test be completed in a careless manner, or in a way designed to make a particular impression, the test will automatically reject the results as “invalid”. The test is very sensitive to inconsistency and deliberate attempts at “impression management”. If after a discussion of the reasons for providing an “invalid” result, the individual wishes to complete the test again, they will be invited to come back for an additional consultation.

Or, you just might feel that you would benefit from a further meeting with me to discuss what came up during the evaluation.

The fee for each additional consultation is \$215.

### **7. Are there rebates available under Medicare?**

A Medicare rebate of approximately \$125 per 50 minute consultation is available under the “Better Access to Mental Health Care Initiative”. This requires a referral from your GP.

The out-of-pocket expenses will count towards the Medicare Safety Net. You can find out more about the Safety Net

here. <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/medicare-safety-net>

**8. What about private health insurance?**

You cannot use your private health insurance ancillary cover to top up the Medicare rebates. You need to decide if you will use Medicare or your private health insurance ancillary cover. That is, you can either access rebates from Medicare or claim on your insurer's ancillary benefits, but not both for the same consultation.

**9. What are the options for parental involvement?**

You are welcome to have your parents present at, or to participate in, any aspect of the evaluation except the testing itself. The testing must be completed in privacy. It is essential that all the answers are your own, and not influenced by the presence of others.