

# Choosing a Cosmetic Surgery provider



**THE HARLEY MEDICAL GROUP®**

Cosmetic Surgery Excellence Since 1983



Our highly trained qualified Nurses are specially selected by us, not only for their experience and expertise but also for their friendliness and approachability.

## Letter from the Chairman

If you are considering Cosmetic Surgery, we recognise that it's probably one of the most important decisions you're ever likely to make, therefore, you need to be sure it's right for you. Once you have made this decision, you also want to be assured that you will be dealing with people you trust and with whom you can feel comfortable. As market leader since 1983, The Harley Medical Group is committed to the highest standard of care in Cosmetic Surgery. We are dedicated to enriching and improving the quality of individual lives.

We strive to provide the very latest technical innovations and most of all, we ensure that we provide clear and accurate information so that you can be sure you are making the right informed decision. We are about patient care, safety and satisfaction and recognise that integrity and ethical care are paramount in meeting the needs of our patients. We provide qualified Cosmetic Surgery Nurse Counsellors who will talk you through anything you need to know.

Established in 1983 The Harley Medical Group has established itself as a leader in the field of Cosmetic Surgery and Non Surgical Solutions. All our Surgeons are on the Specialist Medical Registrar\*. Unlike some Cosmetic Surgery Companies, we have a Medical Director in place, a Medical Advisory Committee and a regular medical audit of Surgeons' Procedures. All our staff are professionally trained and our Nurse-led care ensures your best interests are always at the heart of everything we do.

The Harley Medical Group works with the Department of Health in the UK to oversee the regulation of the entire Cosmetic Surgery sector. Our main aim is to give you all the information available to ensure you make the right choice for you. This booklet will give you an insight into how to choose a Cosmetic Surgery Clinic that operates best practice and the possibilities open to you. The guide has been put together with input from our Surgeons, Nurses and respected industry guidelines and is designed to provide you with the very best advice on next steps.

I hope it will be your first step into a bright new future where you will feel the confidence to fulfil your true potential.

Yours

Mel Braham

\*See page 9 for more details

# Advice on choosing a Cosmetic Surgery clinic

Make sure you choose a provider where the consultation process is led by medical professionals. We advise that you have a full consultation with the specialist Cosmetic Surgeon who will be performing your operation so all your questions can be fully answered.

## Choosing your Cosmetic Surgeon

It can be a daunting prospect choosing a Cosmetic Surgeon from the 100's that operate in the UK and Ireland, so it is important to do your research before you book your procedure. Your operating Surgeon should be properly trained and registered on the Specialist Medical Register\*. It is usually advisable to choose a full-time Surgeon rather than one who does mainly reconstructive surgery and performs just a few Cosmetic Procedures a year. Every Surgeon keeps a logbook of their entire operating history; ask to see this and ask your Surgeon to explain it to you.

## Choosing a clinic

Choosing your clinic is straightforward as all clinics offering Cosmetic Surgery in the UK require registration through The Care Quality Commission and the Healthcare Inspectorate in Wales whereas in Ireland they have a separate regulatory body that applies to Cosmetic Surgery. At The Harley Medical Group however, we apply the same guidelines to our Irish Clinics as we do in the UK. Regular inspections are carried out to ensure compliance with the regulatory standards in the UK. As this regulatory process is not in place in Ireland, follow the guidelines on pages 5, 6, 7, and 8 which will give you some idea of what to look out for and what questions to ask. At your first consultation, **ask, ask, ask...** for an explanation of anything you do not understand.

## Your aftercare

Make sure you've received all your pre- and post-operating instructions in writing before you have your operation. Check that your clinic provides you with a 24-hour number for your use after surgery.

## Complaint policy

Familiarise yourself with the clinic's complaints policy; this should be on public display in their waiting room.

## Re-do policy

Ask about the clinic's policy should some aspect of your operation need to be adjusted or improved upon.

## Finally

Read this booklet closely.

## What to expect from your consultation

Clinic Staff should be fully qualified and experienced in Cosmetic Surgery and show expertise, empathy and approachability.

Your counsellor should thoroughly explain each stage of your procedure, from your consultation with the Surgeon through to the post-operative, follow-up and recovery period. They should discuss the clinical aspects of the procedure, and be able to provide you with the professional history of your Surgeon.

Your counsellor should be able to show you photographs and put you in touch with other patients who have undergone the same procedure. They will provide you with clear and accurate information, enabling you to make an informed decision.

You should have your own personal, fully qualified Cosmetic Surgery Nurse Counsellor, both before and after your procedure, to support you and answer any questions you may have. **At The Harley Medical Group, you will have the benefit of having a consultation with a Cosmetic Surgery Nurse Counsellor before meeting with your Surgeon or Treatment Nurse/Doctor.**

## What to look for in a Plastic Surgeon

When seeking information on a medical procedure you should not be pressured into a decision. You should have the chance to talk to medical professionals and receive the very best advice and information. All the staff\* you meet should be professionally trained and Nurses should be fully qualified and experienced in Cosmetic Surgery and show expertise, empathy and approachability.

The General Medical Council (GMC) Specialist Register\* lists all Surgeons in the UK, and those that specialise in Plastic Surgery. In Ireland, the Medical Council's Specialist Register\* has a section on Plastic Surgeons who have to be qualified in both Plastic Surgery and Cosmetic Surgery procedures. In addition to being on the Specialist Register\*, Surgeons should hold the qualification Fellow of The Royal College of Surgeons, (FRCS) or equivalent from another European or Commonwealth countries.

As well as being registered, it is vital that your Cosmetic Surgeon has plenty of experience. In fact, it is preferable if your Surgeon carries out Cosmetic Surgery procedures on a full time basis. Your Nurse Counsellor should have a detailed record of your Surgeon and be able to answer questions about their background. Make sure you have your first consultation with either a Registered Nurse, trained in Cosmetic Surgery Counselling, or with the Cosmetic Surgeon who will be performing your operation.

\*See page 9 for more details

## Set your standards

In Ireland there is not as yet a Department of Health Clinical registration process which regulates standards for Cosmetic Surgery practices and clinics, which makes it all the more important that you carry out your own checks. The following pages will point you in the right direction by drawing on the Regulatory Standards set in the UK.

- You should look into the quality of their treatment and services as well as the safety and cleanliness of their premises and equipment.
- Ask to see the qualifications and skills of their staff, their provision for training and professional development and their procedures for handling any complaints.
- Research the procedure and understand the risks, side-effects and possible complications.
- Choose a qualified and reputable practitioner who has been appropriately trained and can provide you with the necessary care after the procedure.
- Ask the right questions to help you decide on whether to have the treatment and what other alternatives exist - don't be pressured into having treatment immediately.

## Do a bit of soul searching

If you are considering a surgical or non-surgical procedure it is important that you consider your reasons for wanting the procedure and your expectations of the results it may bring.

Cosmetic Surgery can change your appearance in ways that you might consider desirable but it can be expensive in time and money and, although uncommon, it has been known to result in some changes to your appearance which you may not always find pleasing. It is important that you do not feel pressurised or obliged to have it. It should be a decision you take only after a lot of careful thought and questioning.

As a first step, you need to think long and hard about why you feel you may benefit from Cosmetic Surgery. **Do you expect it to change your life as well as your appearance, and how do you think your life will be better?**

There are alternatives to Cosmetic Surgery. If you feel your concerns about your appearance result from anxieties about social situations or from problems with relationships, you might want to discuss this with your GP and ask their advice and perhaps discuss the possibility of consulting a counselor or psychologist. If you have been considering Cosmetic Surgery because of employment issues, you may want to consider alternatives such as career counselling.

# Make sure you are well advised

You should note that it is not advisable to undergo Cosmetic Surgery if you are pregnant, if you have certain medical conditions, or if you are taking certain medications. You may be nervous about asking for information, but hospitals and clinics who have your best interests at heart will do everything they can to put you at ease and will make sure that you get the information you need. You may find it helpful to write all your questions down so you don't forget anything. You may prefer to attend consultations with your partner, or a relative or friend, who can remind you to ask for information if you forget.

It's a good idea to **talk to your GP** if you're considering Cosmetic Surgery. He or she will be able to give you general advice about Surgery, as well as any other issues you should mention to your Surgeon. There are risks attached to all Cosmetic Surgery procedures; please ensure you enquire about these during your Surgeon's consultation.

## Useful questions to ask

This checklist of questions to ask can help to make sure that the provider gives you all the details you need to know in order to make an informed decision on whether Cosmetic Surgery is right for you. Take it with you when you visit or telephone a provider, or to a personal consultation with a Surgeon.

## The clinicians

- Who will carry out the treatment?
- What qualifications do they have?
- How long since their training in this treatment?
- How frequently do they carry it out?
- How many procedures/treatments have they performed?
- Do they have professional indemnity insurance?

## The cost

- What will be the cost of the consultation with the Surgeon?
- What will be the cost of the treatment, including any materials I may need after it?
- If there are any complications, will I have to pay to have them treated?
- If I change my mind and decide not to complete the treatment, do I still need to pay the full cost for the treatment?

## The treatment

- Is the treatment right for me?
- How long does the treatment take?
- Is the treatment painful and if so what form of anaesthesia is used?
- Is all equipment used sterile and used only for me?
- What are the risks involved?
- What are the complications and success rate of the procedure in this clinic?
- Are there any other treatment options available for me to achieve the results I want?
- Do you have any 'before and after' photographs that I can see?
- Can I speak to anyone else that you have treated?
- Will you want to inform my GP about my treatment?

## After treatment

- What type of care will I need after treatment?
- Will I need pain relief following treatment?
- Will I have swelling or bruising and can these be treated?
- How long will the effects of treatment keep me away from my usual activities?
- At what stage will I be able to judge the results of treatment?
- How long do the results last?
- If I need to see you in the period after treatment, will you be available?
- What will happen if I am unhappy with any aspect of the treatment?
- When can I return to work?

## The record of treatment

- Will you keep a record of my treatment and what form will this take?
- Will my records or photographs be shown to anyone else for any reason?
- Will you ask my permission before releasing my records, including photographs, to anyone else?
- Can I get a copy of my records?
- How long does the clinic retain records after someone's treatment is complete?

# The Harley Medical Group

The Harley Medical Group is a market leader, providing **Cosmetic Surgery and Non-Surgical excellence since 1983**. We provide the highest standards of treatment and care in our hospitals and are concerned that these standards should apply to all clinics.

- The majority of our staff have worked with us for many years and have an excellent **understanding of the reasons** why you are considering having Cosmetic Surgery or Non Surgical procedures.
- All of our Nurses have undergone a minimum of three years general Nurse Training and they have also received **extensive specialist training in nursing Cosmetic Surgery patients and associated treatments**. Our training is constantly reviewed and accepted as being of a high standard by the health authorities that register all of our Cosmetic Surgery clinics in the UK.
- Unfortunately, despite our calling on the authorities for guidelines in Ireland, to date there is no code of practice for Cosmetic Surgery clinics there, so we at **The Harley Medical Group adhere to UK standards and guidelines for our Dublin and Belfast clinics**.
- You will have **your own personal fully qualified Cosmetic Surgery Counsellor**, both before and after your procedure, to support you and answer any questions you may have.
- We will not accept a Cosmetic Surgeon in the UK or Ireland unless they are on the **UK's General Medical Council or the Irish Medical Council's Specialist Register** as a Plastic Surgeon. It is our Surgeon's responsibility to accept you for treatment or explain why you may not be suitable.
- Our **Medical Advisory Committee** of Plastic Surgeons is headed by an independent medical advisor, an NHS consultant.

\* All our surgeons are on the Specialist Register or the equivalent if they were practicing surgeons before the Register was introduced.

# Cost and payment options

The price of your Cosmetic Surgery can only be properly assessed after you have had your consultation.

The price we quote is completely individual and the cost depends on many factors, including whether or not you'll need an overnight stay in one of our hospitals. **This consultation is completely free and patients tell us that they find the chance to chat with an experienced Cosmetic Nurse in confidence extremely reassuring.** You can also discuss ways in which we can help you make your surgery more affordable.

## Affording your surgery

The Harley Medical Group prides itself on the quality of our Surgeons and our Nurse-led care. **You'll find your treatment second to none but also at an affordable price with no hidden extras in the all-inclusive aftercare package.** The price we quote is what you pay, with no nasty surprises. We were established in 1983 and have cared for hundreds of thousands of patients, so you know you'll be in safe hands. We offer an exclusive finance service and can offer flexible terms (UK only). With affordable monthly payment plans, you won't have to wait to look great.

## Our clinics

The Harley Medical Group has Cosmetic Surgery and Non Surgical Solution clinics throughout the UK and Ireland.

To find your nearest clinic visit our web-site [harleymedical.co.uk](http://harleymedical.co.uk) | [harleymedical.ie](http://harleymedical.ie)

## Book Now - Call Freephone

UK: 0800 085 9085

Ireland: 1800 20 20 11



“The level of customer care and professionalism exceeded all my expectations. For anyone considering Cosmetic Surgery, I would definitely recommend The Harley Medical Group”

Patient testimonial

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[harleymedical.ie](http://harleymedical.ie)