

READING PASSAGE 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 27 - 40**, which are based on Reading Passage 3 below.

Plastic Surgery

Plastic surgery is the process of reconstructing or repairing parts of the body by the transfer of tissue, either in the treatment of injury or for cosmetic reasons. It can involve a number of different techniques to move and manipulate body tissue.

In the independent healthcare sector, aesthetic surgery has increased in popularity, showing the increased consumer desire for it. Many people regard aesthetic surgery as a panacea for their personal and relationship difficulties. Active and aggressive media, which were almost absent fifty years ago, have made our society ambitious, and the media have globalised the perception of what is attractive, desirable, and sexy. Society's current obsession with looks may reflect the modern image-obsessed culture, but it can also be due to entrenched insecurities in people's psychological make-up.

In the past few years, a lack of respect for ethical principles in plastic surgery has become increasingly noticeable. As the concepts of beauty undergo change, wrinkles, fat deposits and sun-damaged skin no longer fit into our concept of a neat society. Now that these real or perceived ageing problems receive greater attention from patients and doctors, the ethical considerations also need to be focused upon. Enhancement versus therapy, risks, patient autonomy, beneficence and informed consent are issues that need to be reconsidered and emphasised when considering aesthetic surgery. Principles that could help guide health care professionals include a respect for autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence and justice.

In general, competent adults have the right to decide whether they wish to undergo a surgical procedure or not. The patients' wishes and thereby their right to an informed decision have to be taken into account, provided they have been given sufficient information, which must include the risks together with alternative options. These principles apply even more to aesthetic operations, where patients are not suffering from any 'illness'. These treatments, which may lead to long-term adverse effects on body function and health, involve serious ethical concerns. In such situations, the patient's right for autonomy may contradict the physician's principle of non-maleficence, and therefore, proper consideration is needed before deciding on such treatments. Surgeons must therefore ensure that the patients' expectations are reasonable.

The beneficence principle requires that medical practitioners act in the best interests of patients. Undertaking surgery to improve a patient's self-image and esteem is acceptable. However, defining the patient's best interests can be very difficult. Many people are extremely self-conscious about their appearance and these groups may benefit from aesthetic surgery. Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD) is a psychiatric syndrome, characterised by a preoccupation with a non-existent or minimal cosmetic 'defect' associated with persistent attempts to have the defect surgically corrected. BDD is increasingly recognised, and may be becoming more prevalent.

The principle of non-maleficence ensures that an aesthetic surgeon never acts against a patient's welfare or in a way that may harm a patient. Consultant aesthetic surgeons may decline to operate on patients if they do not believe that the surgery is to the patients' benefit.

Aesthetic surgeons should be reluctant to operate on those with unrealistic expectations, as the risks of surgery may outweigh any benefits. Patients with serious health problems are also at increased risk of complications under general anaesthesia, and again the risks may outweigh the benefits. All such assessments need to be made on an individual basis. In the past, there has been a perception that surgeons have a potential conflict of interest in the independent sector. No surgeon should ever proceed with an operation merely for personal pecuniary gain. All aesthetic surgeons need to take their duty of care to their patients very seriously.

The justice principle requires doctors to ensure that medical care is available to all. Equitable access to healthcare is regarded by many as a basic entitlement. However, resources are limited and it is not possible for any health service to provide aesthetic surgery for all those who would like it. Rationing takes place on the basis of clinical necessity. Inevitably, this introduces subjective judgement about whose need is greater. In the private sector, those who can afford to pay undergo surgery.

Requests for aesthetic surgery occur in all social classes. However, as stated earlier, because of economic considerations, there are no social systems in the world that covers aesthetic surgery, except for some particular interventions. The case of adolescents is especially problematic. The deformity, physical and emotional maturity and the desired outcome for each adolescent patient must be carefully evaluated before any decisions are made. Additional consultations and long discussions before aesthetic surgery are always necessary and this may require expert psychological assessment.

At present, aesthetic surgery is passing through an identity crisis as well as posing an acute ethical dilemma. A closer look from an ethical viewpoint makes it evident that the doctor who offers aesthetic interventions faces many serious ethical problems to do with the identity of the surgeon as a healer. Aesthetic surgery makes profit from the ideology of a society that serves only vanity, youthfulness and personal success, and one which is losing sight of the real values. The real value of a person cannot be reduced to his/her appearance, and medicine as an art should feel the obligation to resist these modern ideologies and should attempt to help people get a more realistic attitude about themselves. Plastic surgeons must resist aesthetic measures in children and adolescents, particularly operations which are totally cosmetic. Nevertheless, exceptions do exist and convincing arguments may support aesthetic measures with children and adolescents to prevent stigmatisation in selected cases.

Glossary

Panacea - a cure for everything

Non-maleficence - non-harming or inflicting the least harm possible to reach a beneficial outcome

Questions 27 – 29

Choose the correct letter **A, B, C or D**.

Write the correct letter in boxes **27 - 29** on your answer sheet.

27 The rise in plastic surgery procedure numbers

- A** reflects the number of surgeons now available.
- B** reflects the growth in demand.
- C** reflects the lower fees now charged.
- D** reflects how media companies have acquired a financial interest in the processes.

28 People's obsession with appearance could stem from exposure to modern culture or

- A** the ubiquity of celebrities in the media.
- B** the desire to fit in with everyone else.
- C** predictable evolutionary development.
- D** people's deep-rooted anxieties.

29 Plastic surgery ethics have recently

- A** been discussed more in the media.
 - B** been made official for professionals in the industry.
 - C** been abused by those involved in the industry.
 - D** been discussed by politicians.
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Questions 30 – 39

Complete the table below.

Write **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the text for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes **30 - 39** on your answer sheet.

Suggested Principles for the Plastic Surgery Industry	
Respect for Autonomy	- Adults should decide for themselves, so their decision must be respected if they've had sufficient information, including the (30) _____ and other possibilities. - This is especially important with aesthetic surgery, which may cause enduring negative effects. - Patient (31) _____ should be realistic.
Beneficence	- Surgeons must bear in mind patients' best interests and ensure that the negative aspects of surgery are outweighed by the benefits. - People with BDD can have a (32) _____ to do with correcting a minor or non-existent flaw. - BDD is more easily recognised nowadays.
Non-maleficence	- Surgeons must always act with the patients' welfare in mind. - Patients with health problems can be at risk of complications whilst undergoing general anaesthesia during surgery. - Decisions regarding surgery should be made on an (33) _____. - Surgeons can experience a possible (34) _____ regarding the need to earn money.
Justice	- Access to healthcare is generally thought of as a fundamental (35) _____. - In reality, restrictions in resources lead to (36) _____, which is dependent on need – subjective judgement is needed to make the choices. - Private treatment is available to people who can afford it.
Aesthetic Surgery	
- The needs for cosmetic surgery span social classes, but (37) _____ do not usually pay the costs. - In particular, a variety of factors must be considered when deciding on cosmetic surgery for adolescents. - Ethical considerations also cause dilemmas for doctors due to issues from deriving (38) _____ from possibly ill-conceived societal ideologies. - Purely aesthetic factors should maybe be considered to avoid (39) _____ in young people.	

Question 40

Choose the correct letter **A, B, C or D**.

Write the correct letter in box **40** on your answer sheet.

- 40** What is the writer's purpose in Reading Passage 3?
- A** To provide an overview of the ethics relating to plastic surgery.
 - B** To show the reasons why plastic surgery can be beneficial.
 - C** To highlight the dangers of plastic surgeons who prioritise their own earnings.
 - D** To describe the risks inherent in plastic surgery procedures.
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WRITING

WRITING TASK 1

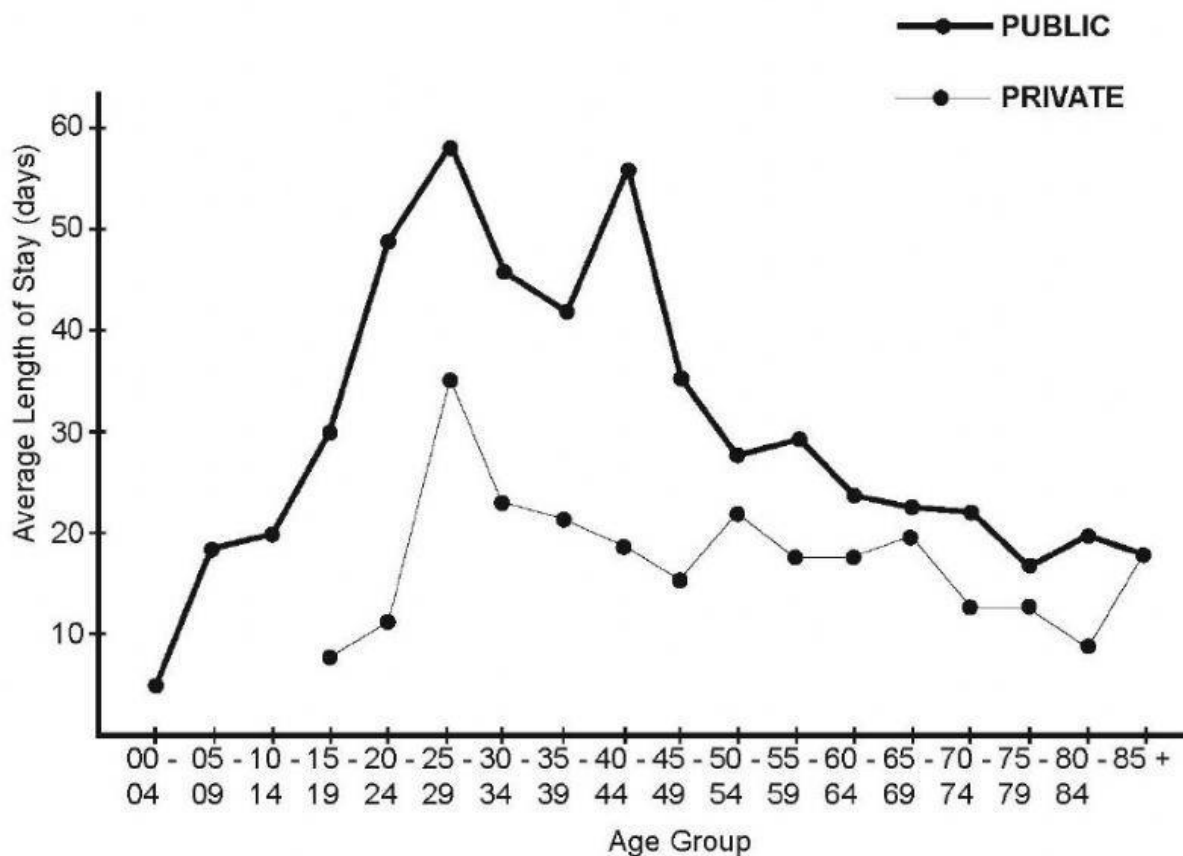
You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The graph below shows the average length of stay last year (in days) for serious injuries for different age groups in private and public hospitals in Queensland, Australia.

Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.

You should write at least 150 words.

**Last Year's Average Length of Stay at Private and Public Hospitals
for Serious Injuries - Queensland, Australia**



WRITING TASK 2

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

One of the major problems that faces today's governments is creating enough satisfactory housing for their increasing populations, whilst still trying to protect the environment.

Discuss this statement and give your opinion.

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your knowledge or experience.

You should write at least 250 words.
