



## **CASE REPORT**

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|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Complaint reference number | 472/06                          |
| 2. Advertiser                 | Medical Cosmetic Centre         |
| 3. Product                    | Professional services           |
| 4. Type of advertisement      | Print                           |
| 5. Nature of complaint        | Health and safety – section 2.6 |
| 6. Date of determination      | Tuesday, 12 December 2006       |
| 7. DETERMINATION              | Dismissed                       |

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT**

This print advertisement depicts a young woman wearing a blue and green gym-style outfit, using a tape to measure her waist. Text on the page reads "Liposuction is a popular and effective way to remove persistent and uneven fat deposits and, once these excess fat cells have been removed, they can never come back. Liposuction is suitable for both men and women and at the Medical Cosmetic Centre you will enjoy the care and support of experienced medical professionals. Call for a free consultation and special offer."

## **THE COMPLAINT**

A sample of comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

*I feel that the liposuction advertisement is particularly irresponsible for using such a young and very obviously thin girl, and for expounding liposuction as a way to discover self-confidence.*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complaint/s regarding this advertisement included the following:

*Text of letter from MCC to direct to complainant:*

*"We are truly sorry that you feel our advertisements are irresponsible. The criteria for Liposuction surgery is very clean in the medical literature. A person who presents with isolated fat pads, which diet and exercise cannot shift, is the ideal candidate for this procedure...However I am concerned that you are concerned about this and would like to assure you that we are an ethical, consumer oriented day surgery unit and a complaint is taken very seriously."*

*I have nothing further to add regarding the advertisement, other than the image has been withdrawn from further advertising, without prejudice as we take all complaints seriously.*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Advertising Standards Board ("Board") considered whether this advertisement breaches section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the "Code").

The Board considered whether the advertisement contravened section 2.6 of the Code dealing with health and safety.

The Board viewed the advertisement and noted the slim woman measuring herself with the tape measure. It considered the complainant's comments that the ad was irresponsible in depicting a slim woman as a candidate for liposuction. The Board did not accept that this was the intention of the

advertisement – the image was more likely to be that of an ‘after shot’ not a ‘before shot’.

The Board determined that, on that basis that the advertiser was not promoting the use of liposuction to bring weight to unhealthy levels, the advertisement does not depict material that was contrary to prevailing community standards on health and safety.

Further finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on any other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.