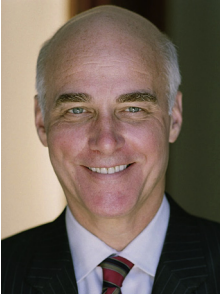


Preface

Ambulatory Plastic Surgery: High Standards Set by Plastic Surgeons



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Ambulatory surgery facilities have increased in number dramatically over the past 50 years. Recognizing the need for safe, affordable, and accessible care, plastic surgeons had the vision to create the American Association for Accreditation of Ambulatory Surgery Facilities, Inc (AAAASF) in 1980.

The mandate for AAAASF was to create an accreditation program that would develop reasonable standards and improve the quality of medical and surgical care in ambulatory surgery facilities, assuring the public access to the best available care safety in accredited facilities.

In 1996, California became the first state to mandate accreditation for all outpatient facilities that administer sedation or general anesthesia. AAAASF was instrumental in the development of the California legislation (AB 595) as well as subsequent laws and regulations in Florida, Georgia, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Texas, and many other states. AAAASF accreditation has been approved by some State Departments of Health in lieu of State Licensure and is a deemed authority for

Medicare accreditation. Although AAAASF was initially developed by plastic surgeons for plastic surgical facilities, the preponderance of AAAASF's accredited facilities are now in specialties other than plastic surgery.

Accrediting more than 2000 ambulatory facilities, including office-based, free-standing surgical centers that are used by one or multispecialties, AAAASF has taken a leadership role in championing the need for all states to require accreditation or licensure for all outpatient facilities.

AAAASF has led the way in data collection to improve patient care through the development of an Internet-based Quality Assurance Program that has collected over 9,000,000 procedures for analysis. Currently, AAAASF is innovating new methods of data collection to foster the practice of surgery through evidence-based medicine and to raise the bar of safety for the public and the surgeons operating in these facilities.

This *Clinics in Plastic Surgery* publication focuses on outpatient surgery, highlighting important information about safe surgical practice, and

documents the excellent track record achieved by facilities accredited by AAAASF.

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