Cosmetic surgery abroad

CAP Enforcement Report

March 2026

About this report

CAP Enforcement Reports explain the actions CAP takes to address non-compliance in specific sectors. They also show how these actions affect overall compliance rates.

These reports use insights from our AI-based Active Ad Monitoring system (AAMs) to track ads in certain sectors.

This report examines the impact of enforcement against cosmetic surgery clinics based abroad who were advertising in an irresponsible manner in paid for ads on Meta between December 2024 and December 2025. It highlights encouraging improvements in compliance levels after these actions.

Why this sector matters

Most consumers will be aware, through stories in the media, of the risks associated with undergoing cosmetic surgery. This is especially the case when those procedures are conducted abroad, where pre- and post-operative standards of care may differ to the UK. Given the potential risks arising from such procedures, it’s important that we tackle irresponsible cosmetic surgery advertising directed at UK audiences.

Previous regulatory action

The ASA published a number of upheld rulings in 2023 and 2024.

CAP subsequently issued an Enforcement Notice in February 2024 to provide guidance on the rules that apply when advertising to UK-based consumers and required clinics to amend their ads accordingly.

What did we do?

After the Enforcement Notice was issued, CAP conducted a rolling programme of follow up monitoring and enforcement including, in December 2024, adopting a more targeted approach focusing on those advertisers responsible for the highest volume of ads.

That work consisted of **two phases**:

In **phase one**, from December 2024, we focused on 18 cosmetic surgery clinics based abroad, with the largest social media reach. In a representative sample of this sector, those clinics accounted for around 5 million out of 10 million ad impressions.

Using the AAMs, we captured 4,100 unique paid ads on Meta during this time.

In **phase two**, in September 2025, we began monitoring a further six clinics, responsible for around 2.5 million ad impressions.

Using our AAMs, we captured 298 unique paid ads on Meta during this time.

Work with these clinics is still ongoing, but some early insights are provided in phase two of this report.

During both phases, potentially problematic ads were checked to see if they were sticking to the social responsibility advertising rules in the CAP Code and the guidance in the 2024 Enforcement Notice.

Compliance issues identified

Among the ads that broke the rules, across both phases, the main issues we identified were:

- "Mommy makeover" packages, which can have the effect of exploiting body insecurities in new mothers and perpetuate pressure on them to conform to body image stereotypes.
- Time-limited offers, that can pressure people into making rushed decisions to undergo surgery.

Phase one

Compliance action taken

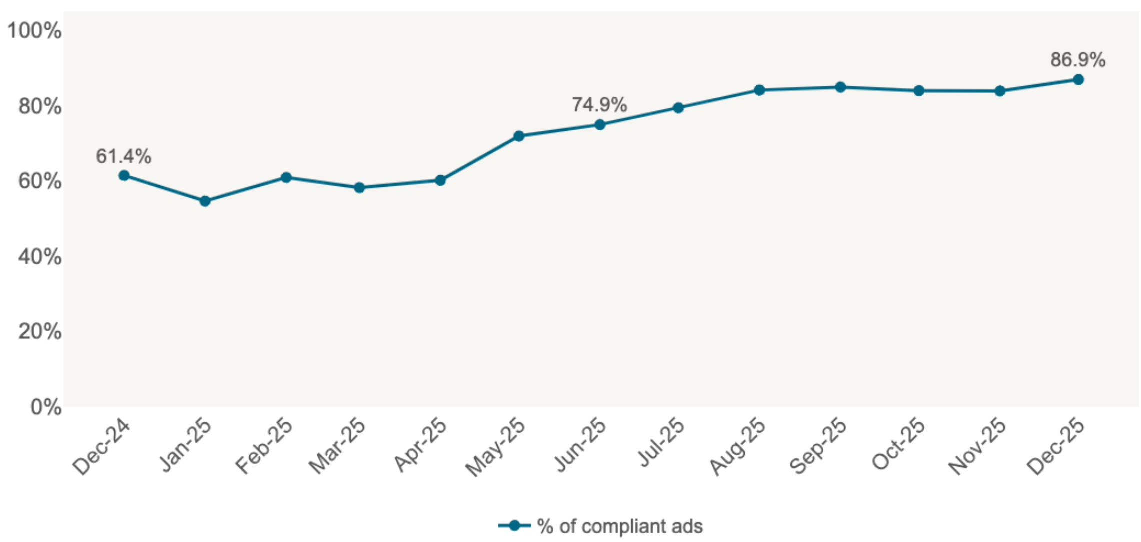
During this phase, the Compliance team contacted a total of 18 advertisers, instructing them to amend or remove their non-compliant ads. Of those:

- 13 clinics agreed to amend or remove the ads we flagged to them.
- Four clinics appear to have ceased advertising.

Impact on compliance levels

This targeted action led to an improvement in compliance rates during the monitoring period – shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Monthly proportion of compliant ads from advertisers throughout the monitoring period



- When monitoring began in December 2024, the proportion of compliant ads was 61.4%.
- By June 2025, the compliance rate had increased to 74.9%.
- By December 2025, 86.9% (2,991 ads from 17 clinics) were compliant with the social responsibility rules and the 2024 Enforcement Notice.

Phase two

Compliance action taken

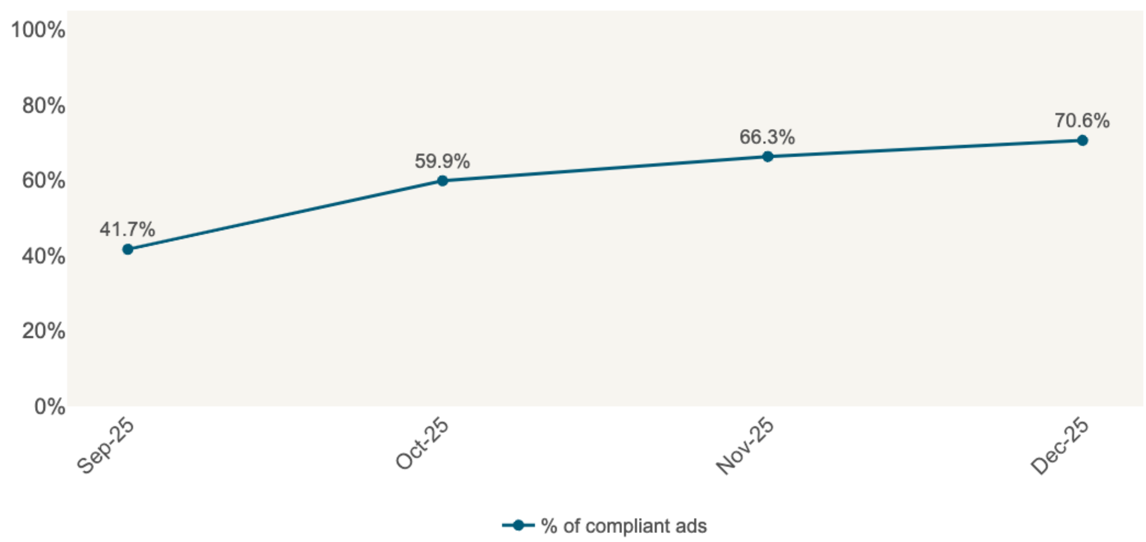
During this phase, the Compliance team contacted a total of six advertisers, instructing them to amend or remove their non-compliant ads. Of those:

- Three clinics agreed to amend or remove their non-compliant ads.
- Three clinics did not respond.

Impact on compliance levels

This targeted action led to an increase in compliant ads during the monitoring period – shown in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Monthly proportion of compliant ads from advertisers throughout the monitoring period



- When monitoring began in September 2025, the proportion of compliant ads was 41.7%.
- By October 2025, the compliance rate had increased to 59.9%, and in November 2025, to 66.3%.
- By December 2025, 70.6% of ads (183 ads from five clinics) were compliant with the social responsibility rules and the 2024 Enforcement Notice.

Conclusion and next steps

By focusing our attention on those advertisers responsible for the highest volume of ads, we have driven improvements across the sector. We will continue working with those advertisers identified in phase two to address any outstanding issues. We are also in conversation with Meta about their role in supporting compliance.