



THE NMC ISSUED GUIDELINES FOR THE REGULATION OF LIVE SURGERY BROADCASTS IN INDIA

On 26th July 2025, the National Medical Commission (“**NMC**”) issued new guidelines to regulate the conduct and broadcast of live surgeries in India (“**Guidelines**”). These Guidelines form part of the extant compliance framework in the conduct of live surgeries in India.

BACKGROUND

These Guidelines emerged in response to a petition filed before the Supreme Court in the case of *Rahil Chaudhary and Others v. Union of India*, which raised concerns about Live Surgical Broadcasts (“**LBS**”) conducted by private hospitals. The petition highlighted issues such as the exploitation of patients, inadequate consent, and the exposure of patients to unnecessary risks for the hospitals’ ulterior motives.

Mr. Gopal Sankarnarayanan, senior counsel appearing on behalf of petitioners raised additional concerns relating to patients of lower economic status who are offered surgical fee waivers, are often inducted to participate in such LBS without adequate understanding or autonomy in decision making. Whereas, in a specific instance in 2015, an LBS was conducted by one of the leading teaching hospitals in the National Capital in the course of which the patient died during the surgery. Further, it was contended that advertising and sponsorship are the main motivations for conducting such procedures which are then broadcasted to audiences at conferences. In light of these concerns, the petitioners sought *inter alia*, direction of the NMC to appoint a committee to regularly monitor live surgeries and ensure that incidents of abuse do not happen and to further frame guidelines and a regulatory framework to regulate the conduction of live surgeries.

In light of these concerns, the Ethics & Medical Registration Board (“**EMRB**”) of the NMC, issued a public notice on January 23, 2024 (“**Notice 1**”), wherein as per petitioners prayer in the case above, it was decided that a committee of experts was to be constituted to give recommendations on the issue of live surgeries broadcast by private hospitals in the country, with the approval of the Chairman of the NMC. The NMC under the purview of Notice 1 had invited all stakeholders and members of the public to provide comments on the issue of live surgery broadcast within 10 (ten) days from the date of Notice 1. Subsequently, the EMRB of the NMC issued an addendum to Notice 1 on January 29, 2024, wherein all the stakeholders and members of public were asked to submit comments required under Notice 1, through an email – ethics@nmc.org.in, within 10 (ten) days, from the issuance of the addendum to Notice 1.



Acting upon this, the NMC constituted a committee to provide recommendations on the regulation of live surgeries and invited comments from stakeholders and the general public regarding such broadcasts.

Subsequently, a public notice was issued on 26th July 2025 by NMC, detailing the background, concerns, and guidelines for conduct and broadcast of live surgeries. It is to be carefully noted that an LBS when performed in an institution listed in the schedule of NMC Act, 2019 for its students or registered medical practitioners are exempt from the Guidelines.

CONCERNS

Significant concerns for the use of live surgery that are discussed in the Guidelines are that though live surgeries can be educational, it may not provide the same depth of learning as interactive or hands-on training since observers might miss key details or fail to grasp complex nuances of the procedure. Live surgeries also bring out ethical issues regarding the use of patients for educational purposes, since patients are seldom informed that the surgeon's attention may be divided which would potentially be putting them at risk. Further, the presence of large cameras and audience may impact the patient's comfort, potentially leading to anxiety or discomfort. Consequently, advertising, sponsorship and professional showmanship overshadows the true purpose of live surgery as healthcare facilities showcase their capabilities, surgeons flaunt their skills, and companies promote their products, all at the expense of patient safety. As a result, several doctors' associations in India and abroad have banned live surgeries in conferences.

Link for the Guidelines:

<https://www.nmc.org.in/MCIRest/open/getDocument?path=/Documents/Public/Portal/LatestNews/Public%20Notice%20dt%2026-07-2025%20with%20Live%20Surgery%20Guidelines.pdf>



This is only for general informational purposes and shall not be construed to constitute legal advice (which can only be given after being formally engaged and familiarizing ourselves with all the relevant facts). Should you have any queries, or require any assistance or clarifications with regard to anything contained in this newsletter, please feel free to contact our partner, Mr. Pradnesh Warke.

The Team



PRADNESH WARKE

Partner

Email – p.warke@luthra.com



RAVI RAJ SHEKHAR

Senior Associate

Email – r.shekhar@luthra.com



DEVASHREE KULKARNI

Associate

Email – dkulkarni@luthra.com



TANAY JHA

Associate

Email – t.jha@luthra.com

OFFICES



NEW DELHI

1st and 9th Floors, Ashoka Estate,
24 Barakhamba Road, New Delhi - 110 001
T: +91 11 4121 5100 F: +91 11 2372 3909
E: delhi@luthra.com



MUMBAI

20th Floor, Indiabulls Finance Center,
Tower 2 Unit A2, Elphinstone Road,
Senapati Bapat Marg, Mumbai - 400 013
T: +91 22 4354 7000
F: +91 22 6630 3700
E: mumbai@luthra.com



BENGALURU

3rd Floor, Onyx Centre, No. 5, Museum Road,
Bengaluru - 560 001
T: +91 80 4112 2800 / +91 80 4165 9245
F: +91 80 4112 2332
E: bengaluru@luthra.com



HYDERABAD

Serene Towers,
House No. 8-2-623/A,
Road No. 10, Banjara Hills,
Hyderabad, Telangana - 500034
T: +91 40 7969 6162
E: hyderabad@luthra.com



CHENNAI

Prestige Palladium Bayan,
8th Floor, Greams Road, Nungambakkam Division,
Egmore, Chennai - 600 006,
Tamil Nadu
T: +91 95604 88155
E: chennai@luthra.com