



Mr Ian Katz
Director of Programmes
Channel 4
124-126 Horseferry Rd
Westminster, London
SW1P 2TX

24 October 2019

Dear Mr Katz,

We the undersigned, are appalled and extremely concerned about the new Channel 4 show 'The Surjury', which offers people the chance to make their case to receive a free 'life changing' cosmetic procedure.

It is alarming that a public service television network would produce a programme that glamorises and in turn, normalises undergoing cosmetic surgery, using enticing language such as 'the surgery you've always wanted.'

As a group, we have been inundated with correspondence from our constituents, the general public and organisations on the rise of cosmetic procedures in our society, particularly among young people and the effect this has on their mental health. Figures published by the NHS in 2018, showed that over 5% of young women between 17-19 years old, were identified as having body dysmorphic disorder (BDD), an anxiety disorder characterised by the obsessive idea that some aspect of their body or appearance is severely flawed and warrants exceptional measures to hide or fix.

A report by the Nuffield Council on Bioethics on Cosmetic Procedures highlighted that broadcast media play a significant role in influencing how cosmetic procedures are perceived, "through the growth and popularity of cosmetic surgery makeover shows... a common feature conveyed by many is the idea that surgical 'fixes' to problems are always available".

'The Surjury' appears to be no different and as such the effects of this show could be potentially harmful as it will perpetuate unrealistic beauty standards and discriminatory ideals.

It is completely irresponsible of Channel 4 to promote this show on its website with no clear age limit and information on the effects of cosmetic procedures. It is also unclear what the criteria of being a 'jury' on the show is. Members of the public with no medical qualification or experience assessing underlying psychological issues such as Body Dysmorphic Disorder should not be placed in a position to decide whether or not somebody else receives a cosmetic surgery.

We therefore strongly urge that Channel 4 reconsiders and halts the production of this potentially harmful and toxic show, before it airs.

We will also be writing to the broadcasting regulator, Ofcom, asking them to look into this show, in line with the Broadcasting Code.

We look forward to hearing from you on this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Carolyn Harris MP, Co-chair APPG on Beauty, Aesthetics and Wellbeing

Judith Cummins MP, Co-chair, APPG on Beauty, Aesthetics and Wellbeing

Alberto Costa MP, Vice-chair, APPG on Beauty, Aesthetics and Wellbeing

Jackie Doyle Price MP, Former Mental Health Minister

Kevan Jones MP Member, APPG on Beauty, Aesthetics and Wellbeing