



Style and substance at Signature Dental

By David Petrikas

A South Perth dental surgery which literally attracts patients from across Australia and around the world has had a style makeover in keeping with the high quality of dental care on offer.

Dr Allison Kale and her husband Raj have completely revamped the former Peninsula Family Dental practice in fashionable South Perth to become Signature Dental.

The new look is part of an expansion which has seen the practice grow from a one chair practice 15 years ago to a modern four room surgery.

With commercial property in the area difficult to find, the decision was made to expand into an adjoining office and totally revamp the practice. Dr Kale said this presented an opportunity to improve both the image of the practice and the equipment to meet contemporary needs.

“It doesn’t matter how good a dentist is, perception is reality and the physical envi-

ronment portrays an expectation of the level of care.”

She added that an attractive space also made for more contented and productive staff and made the practice more functional, private and comfortable for patients.

From an interior design point of view the result is a triumph and has been very well accepted by patients.

The impact starts before entering the reception area, with striking new signage and colourful flowers visible through the glass frontage.

The colour palette and interior finishes including extensive use of timber is cutting edge and modern, while at the same time taking design cues from the 1960’s.

Signature Dental’s bold new corporate colours of chocolate and lime are reflected in the wall artworks, flowers, furniture and even some of the dental chairs which are covered in bright green upholstery.

While appealing to an adult clientele, a suitably fun and quirky touch is provided by matching ‘lion and tiger’ upholstered children’s chairs in a small TV nook opposite reception. The space is well stocked with blocks, children’s books and toys to keep young minds occupied.

Adjacent to the waiting room is a very attractive ‘5 star’ bathroom, complete with rolled hand towels and upmarket toiletries.

The admin area behind the front desk has a bright outlook and allows staff to easily combine admin and reception duties.

Further along, the accounts area has been kept deliberately separate so staff can give their full attention to patients and there is privacy for settling accounts.

Leading off the corridor are two private consultation rooms, followed by the four surgeries (three currently equipped) and a private office on one side and a U-shaped sterilization room opposite.



The sterilization room features a double sided full height cabinet which can be loaded from inside and accessed from outside to take tubs and trays direct to the surgeries. It is also equipped with a Type B W&H Lisa sterilizer and 'LisaLog' data logging system which can be integrated into patient records.

Leading off the hallway is a private staff kitchen which is subtly, but effectively lit by high frosted glass panes which catch the northern sun. Frosted glass is also used to good effect on each of the surgeries, consult rooms and offices which are all labelled - the surgeries being named after trees rather than numbered.

Apart from being a nice environment in which to work, Dr Kale set a design brief and introduced her own ideas to ensure everything worked as efficiently as possible.

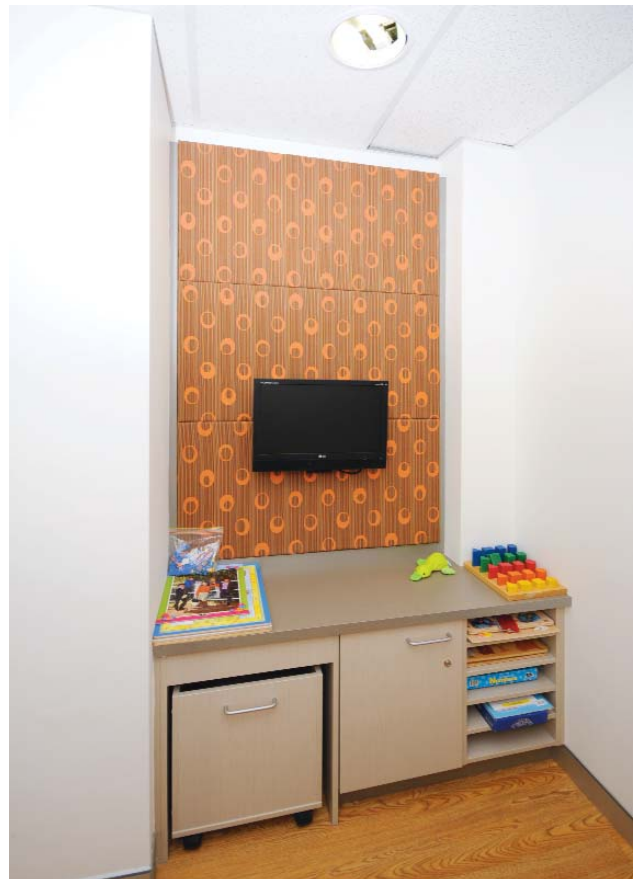
This included two doors to each of the surgeries to allow ease of access for staff and patients.

"These days downtime is a major consideration, so if a dental assistant has to leave the room for any reason we don't have to sit the patient up. Also, the patient doesn't have to walk around the spittoon whether the chair is set up for a left handed or right handed dentist."

This led to a choice of A-dec chairs, which apart from their renowned reliability and backup service, were one of the only chairs which can be easily and quickly adapted for left or right handed use.

Raj Kale commented that the patient should never be inconvenienced by the equipment nor should left handed dentists be forced to work 'right handed' or vice versa.

Dr Kale said the A-dec 500 was ideal for left handed dentistry and there are very few machines that do it well. "In a multi room practice you can change the chair from left to right handed in two minutes," she said.





Another plus of the A-dec 500 Continental unit was the superior ergonomics and the fact that the head unit was much easier to clean which was a distinct hygiene advantage.

"I love the Continental because you don't have to worry about the weight of the handpiece and there is no twisting required to reach them. There are also no cables hanging down which can be a cost saving potential compared to a traditional delivery system where if you knock a handpiece off it's holder it ends up on the floor and may break," Dr Kale said.

"Also, because of the chair design you can sit right 'under' the patient instead of sitting 'at' the chair and that makes procedures



Summary

The Practice

Principal	Dr Allison Kale
Type of Practice	General
Location	South Perth, Western Australia
Size	180 square metres
No of chairs	3 + 1

The Team

Design	Levitch Design Associates
Construction	Elite Design
Installer	West Coast Dental Depot

Equipment

Dental Units	A-dec 500
Sterilisation	Lisa 500
X-ray	Gendex
Compressor	Jun-Air
Suction	Dürr VS600
Software	Dental4Windows

easier. The Dental Assistant also has the suction right in front of them and the ergonomic advantage of this makes a huge difference to them and they are not at risk of a back injury from constant twisting.

The A-dec 500 chairs have been equipped with the latest digital intraoral cameras and chair mounted monitors. Instrumentation includes W&H electric micro-motors which were seamlessly integrated with the A-dec Deluxe electronic touchpad.

Dr Kale said the new practice allowed them to increase the level of care to patients, with the focus now on 'comprehensive care' compared to the 'drill and fill' of days gone by.

"Our old practice didn't have the space or the equipment to offer all we could do for patients who need longer spent with them. The consultation rooms are a good example of this, as are the new instruments, intraoral cameras and monitors which create a whole new experience for patients.

"My main motivation for choosing the A-dec 500 was having something reliable which I knew would keep going and if there was ever a problem it

was going to be easy to fix and it had the backup and support.

"However, I'd have to say the bells and whistles are a real bonus and I find the chair is like a 'one-stop shop'. Everything is there - if I pick up a handpiece or pick up a camera it is all operated from the chair."

Feedback from patients has also supported the choice of equipment and there are lots of comments in terms of comfort of the chair, together with the 'wow factor' of the digital camera and monitor which involve patients much more in the presentation of cases.

