



## Pacific Smiles expands in Hunter Valley

**P**acific Smiles Group is one of the original entrants in the Australian dental corporate scene. Since its inception in 2003, it has grown by both acquisition and the establishment of new centres. One of PSG's original centres is located in Greenhills, near Maitland, in the lower Hunter Valley. Although the history of this centre goes back to the 1930's, it moved to the current site in January 2000, expanding from a 5-chair centre to a 6-chair centre. Since then, the area has continued to grow, resulting in a corresponding additional expansion to a very busy 10-chair centre.

More chairs could have been added to this centre, but Alex Abrahams, the

founder of PSG, noticed that many of the new patients were coming from residential developments 10km to the west in the Rutherford region and further up the Valley. Further investigations confirmed that the regional shopping centre at Rutherford was on the threshold of a building program. PSG proceeded to secure a large commercial space opposite the main shopping centre.

The attraction of shopping centres is the exposure to the enormous volume of passing trade, central location and easy parking. Levitch Design Associates were then commissioned to design a dental and eye care centre. The site came with some problems, including a change to the floor

level of about a metre in the middle of the once multi-tenanted premises. LDA recommended the installation of a raised floor, as change in internally levels is very hard to treat with ramps or stairs without losing substantial space.

The space of 386 square metres would allow for seven dental chairs, generous sterilisation area, waiting room, administrative offices and staff room. The practitioners would have their own retreat for times when they needed to access the internet, discuss the day's cases or make private phone calls. As well, an eye care retail display and optometrists rooms were provided.

The exterior has clear signage and marketing panels, a must for any centre. The





entrance opens onto a central reception desk with Eye Care to the left and Dental on the right. The waiting room houses generous banquette seating and an enclosed play area for children. Two separate corridors allow for access to the Eye Care or Dental wings. A central sterilising area allows efficient service of all operative rooms equally. Two bays allow for clean and dirty movement of instruments and a tray rack is accessible from both

sides so that nurses can collect trays from the corridor, without crowding the sterilisation area.

The corridor widths were increased to allow for larger than normal traffic flow. A standard PSD layout in all surgeries allows practitioners to move from room to room without missing a beat. A-dec Radius dental units with chair-mounted overhead light and wall-mounted x-ray arm are standard configurations.



## Summary

### The Dental & Eyecare Centre

|                     |                                   |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Owner               | Pacific Smiles Group Pty Ltd      |
| Founder             | Dr Alex Abrahams                  |
| Managing Director   | John Gibbs                        |
| Location            | Rutherford, NSW                   |
| Type                | General Dental and Eye Care       |
| Size                | 386 square metres (inc balconies) |
| No of dental chairs | 7                                 |

### The Team

|                      |                                       |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Interior Design      | Levitch Design Associates             |
| Senior Designers     | Antony Poate and Anne Levitch         |
| Marketing Manager    | Deb Buckley, PSG                      |
| Construction         | DPG Pty Limited                       |
| Project Manager      | Leah Trend, PSG                       |
| Dental Installer     | Scott Donahue, Presidential           |
| Signage              | Signarama Pty Ltd                     |
| IT Design & Install. | Andrew Falk, Hardware Systems & Sales |

### Equipment

|            |                                                                   |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Chairs     | A-dec Radius                                                      |
| Autoclaves | W&H Lisa Class B                                                  |
| Handpieces | NSK                                                               |
| X-Ray      | Gendex x-ray generators with<br>Diagora Optime Digital PSP System |
| OPG        | Sirona Orthophos 3DS                                              |
| Compressor | Dürr Trio                                                         |
| Suction    | Dürr VS900                                                        |
| Software   | Dental 4 Windows                                                  |

A consultation room has been provided close to the reception area so both administration staff and practitioners can make use of it.

The staff room is generous, catering for large staff numbers when all chairs are utilised, with kitchen bench, appliances and staff lockers nearby.

The colours and finishes chosen by LDA fit in with the established PSD palette. The aim was to produce a feeling of calm and relaxation with small touches of timber panelling to connect with the regional setting. The commercial carpet tiles chosen were softer yellows and browns, unifying the centre, while being practical and long wearing.

Eye-catching exterior signage and reassuring interior graphics were carefully developed for their energy, appeal and representation of the Pacific Smiles patient demographic - from families and children, through to young professional couples and seniors.

The design for the project commenced in November 2007 and the centre opened in October 2008. The decision to expand to an adjacent growth centre proved to be strategically and financially opportune. The large new Pacific Smiles Dental Centre at Rutherford moved into profitability within 6 months of opening.

