



## New perio and implant practice opens on Collins

**D**r Andrew Tucker always liked “making things” and this manual dexterity was put to good use in dentistry. He later specialized in periodontics and implant surgery. After finishing dental under-graduate studies at the University of Melbourne in 1987, he worked for 6 years in general practice in Melbourne followed by 3 years in remote communities in Far North Queensland and the Northern Territory.

The late 90’s saw him move to the UK where he worked for 3 years in various hospital oral surgery training positions, before returning to Melbourne to undertake postgraduate studies.

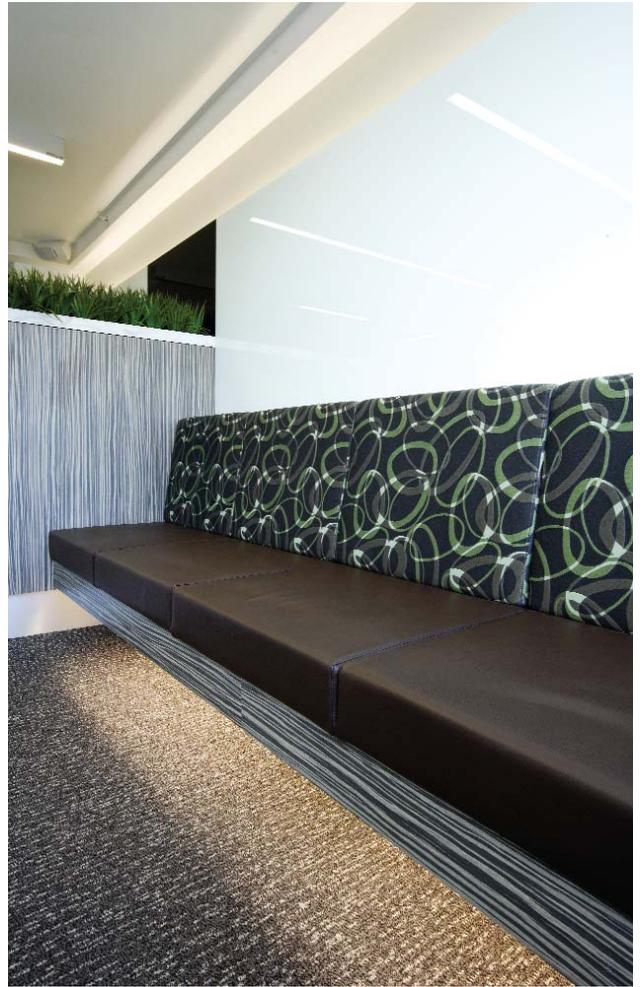
After completing specialty periodontics training at the University of Melbourne, he opened his own periodontics practice in

2004. The practice attracted city, suburban and country patients and soon waiting lists were getting too long. Dr Tucker decided to find larger premises to accommodate associates and provide timely treatment to a growing patient base. He found the opportunity across the street at 15 Collins Street and on March 1, 2010 opened Collins Street Periodontics.

In the lead up to that however, life was proving to be quite busy for Dr Tucker and on top of running a busy practice, he also taught the Periodontics Specialty Program and Graduate Diploma for Clinical Implant Dentistry at the University. In the midst of planning and building, he and his wife also welcomed their third child in early January. So he decided he needed the right help to minimise stress, fuss and building time.

Loaded with ideas and sketches, he approached Levitch Design Associates (LDA) to make his vision a reality. He spoke with other architects but decided on LDA due to their experience and track record. “I always wanted a dental architect,” he said. “I wanted someone who I was confident with; someone who could take me through the whole process. I checked out LDA’s work at local practices and they had recently completed another surgery within the building I was looking at. That dentist gave me his personal recommendation to work with them.”

Dr Tucker said his aim was a practice with three or four surgeries, an efficient traffic-flow and timeless style. The whole process started early October 2009, with the design and council approvals taking about three months.



15 Collins Street is an older building and the suite, although taking up half the floor, was still only 135 square metres. It also had some limitations; the floor to ceiling height was just 2.4 metres which meant there was no ceiling space above for air conditioning and no space below the floor for plumbing. To overcome this, bulkheads were built to bring the air conditioning to each room and above-floor water waste was installed.

The building process was slowed by the small elevators within the building. It took the builders two weeks alone just to remove the demolition debris because of this limited capacity.

LDA project designer, Todd O'Donnell, said he looked at different options in order to achieve Dr Tucker's brief. Despite the confined space, he found room for a fourth consultation/hygiene room on top of three fully equipped surgeries.

The lighting was another consideration, with the designers deciding to bring in as much natural sunlight as possible via glazing at the front and rear of the tenancy, which effectively illuminates the rest of the surgery by reflecting off mirrors lining the length of the corridor.

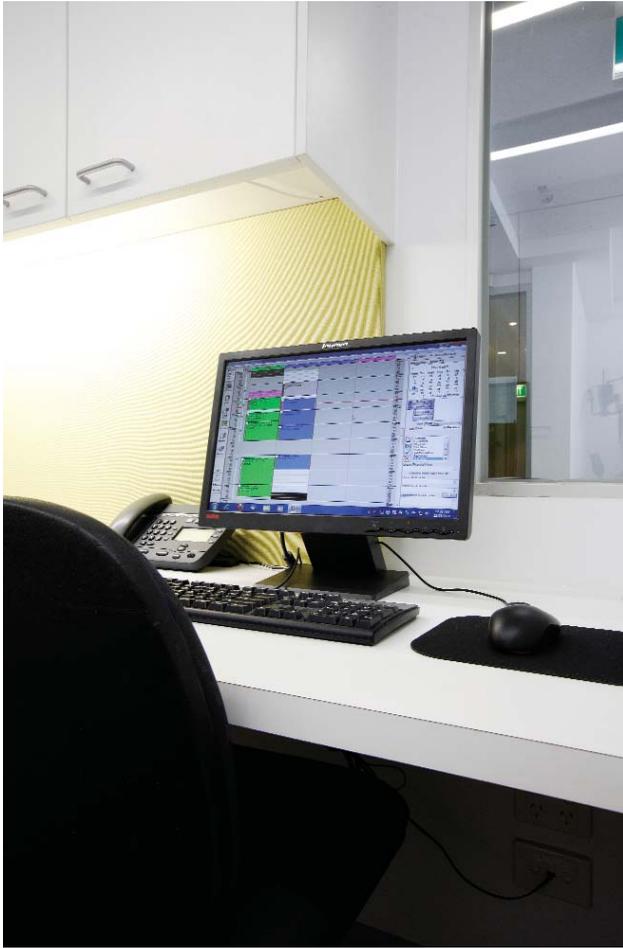




The design effectively lets light travel from the front views over the city, all the way through the surgery to the rear that overlooks the Yarra River and Melbourne Park. Mr O'Donnell said from there he created a colour palette inline with Dr Tucker's desires for his surgery. "He wanted the design to be understated and simple; he didn't want to be ostentatious," he said.

"He decided to use his corporate colours - grey, white and green - and it worked very well."

Dr Tucker loved the carpet at LDA's offices in Sydney, so he decided to incorporate it in the waiting areas. Vinyl flooring was used in the surgeries for easy cleaning and chocolate-brown synthetic floorboards were laid in the corridor. However, a flash of colour and edge were introduced with custom artwork; photographs of iconic Melbourne laneways.



## Summary

### The Practice

Principal	Dr Andrew Tucker
Practice	Collins Street Periodontics
Type of Practice	Specialist periodontics
Location	Melbourne, Victoria
Size	135 square metres
No of chairs	3 + 1

### The Team

Design	Levitch Design Associates
Senior Designers	Todd O'Donnell and Antony Poate
Construction	Newvan Construction
Project Manager	Liam O'Shea

### Equipment

Dental Units	Sirona C8+ x 3 + Belmont Pro II x 1
Sterilisation	Melag Vacuklav 24-B
X-Ray	Sirona Heliident DS
Compressor	Dürr Primo
Suction	Dürr VS 300S
Software	Ultimo Dental

Clinically speaking, everything else was a straightforward set up. Dr Tucker asked staff for their input on the clinical layout of the surgeries and sterilisation bay. In the surgeries, one blue dental chair was transferred from the previous practice and three new black Sirona C8+ dental units were added. His new Dürr compressor and suction motors and Melag autoclave were also supplied by Sirona.

In regards to computer software, Dr Tucker decided to use Ultimo Dental, a program modified for Australian Periodontists. He said it's great to use as it gives lots of versatility with periodontal charting.

The non-clinical areas were also carefully considered. Room for a large table wasn't necessary in the staff room, as staff usually eat out at local food courts during lunch breaks. With this in mind, a high table and bar stools furnish the staff room, effectively taking up a fraction of the space. Dr Tucker also requested that a shower be included in the design so that he could ride his bike to work.

After five months of remodeling, Dr Tucker and his team moved in on March 1 this year.

Dr Tucker said he was pleased that his staff appreciated

a nice space in which to work, but he was pleasantly surprised by all the compliments and congratulations from patients.

"I think patients appreciate that we made such an effort to create a space where they are going to be comfortable," he said. "I very much enjoyed the process working with LDA on achieving the right mix and the whole experience has had benefits on a personal level. You get the confidence to take anything else on; it was such a nice change from doing the same thing every day."

Since opening at 15 Collins Street this year, Collins Street Periodontics has become substantially busier and Dr Tucker has taken on additional staff to keep up with demand. There are also now three highly skilled periodontists, all exhibiting good patient rapport.

Dr Tucker is quietly proud of his new practice, which is personable, fresh and comfortable. All the ingredients necessary for providing quality specialist services to the community.

