

# Raising standards of healthcare environments across Australia for over 27 years



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By **Marton Jakab** – Marketing Director – Levitch Design Australia

With the continuing growing population in Australia, comes the need to create more healthcare environments, small and large, across both the private and public sectors. However, Australia's demographic challenges are vast. Apart from needing more hospitals and private practices to keep up with growth, one particular statistic stands out as one of the most relevant to healthcare – the growing population of over 65's. This age group is growing rapidly and is estimated to be around a quarter of our total population by 2042. We are also living longer and the healthcare system needs to cater for this. Not an easy task.

Having been a design and construction leader in the healthcare fit-out industry for over 27 years, Levitch Design Australia is trying to do their part to create environments which enrich people's lives. Together with all of our clients (doctors, dentists and other healthcare professionals), we believe that the standards of private medical centres and dental practices across Australia are lifting ... faster than ever.

We often visit sites that have been the same for 30 years and we turn them into stunning environments and successful practices. After working in their brand new space, the practice owners invariably tell us they should have done it a lot sooner. We

are proud of every single practice that we create because we treat each project as if it was our very own. Every practice is unique. Every practice is different.

We have seen many changes over the past 27 years. One in particular happened in the late 1990's when legislation was introduced to allow advertising. Today, medical centres and dental practices need to advertise in some capacity so that they are noticed in amongst the intense competition in both the suburbs and cities across the country. The question is always, what is the best form of marketing? One particular marketing tool for a practice owner that is actually becoming more and more important is their premises. How it looks and feels can make a big impact on a patient and does determine whether that person comes back to that environment or in fact goes to the competition around the corner or across the road. In fact what we see influences our decisions more than what we hear. And because of this competition, the standard of healthcare spaces are improving.

In the past decade, renovating an existing practice was the most popular project that we carried out for our clients. Today, as more and more healthcare professionals graduate from University and gain some experience, the new trend is to start a practice from scratch. One problem though, that we come across every day is actually finding a site and location that is suitable for a brand new medical centre or dental practice. The desire to start a practice and go out on your own is there, but the spaces aren't. We are always looking out for sites and are happy to find locations for our clients.

One final trend that we are noticing is a strong interest from other healthcare professionals such as podiatrists and physiotherapists. They too want to create spaces that WOW their patients and we can certainly do that. ♦

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