



Seeing the light of better design

Dr Shujia Cheng's practice in the Melbourne suburb of Caulfield South has been designed to give her patients and staff a warm, comfortable and inviting experience. After 15 years of practising in premises that were mostly dark and out-dated, Dr Cheng was ready for a change. In building a new practice, her goal was to create a working environment that reflected her personality and the level of care she was providing.

After a false start with a local architect, design and construction of the new practice was awarded to Medifit.

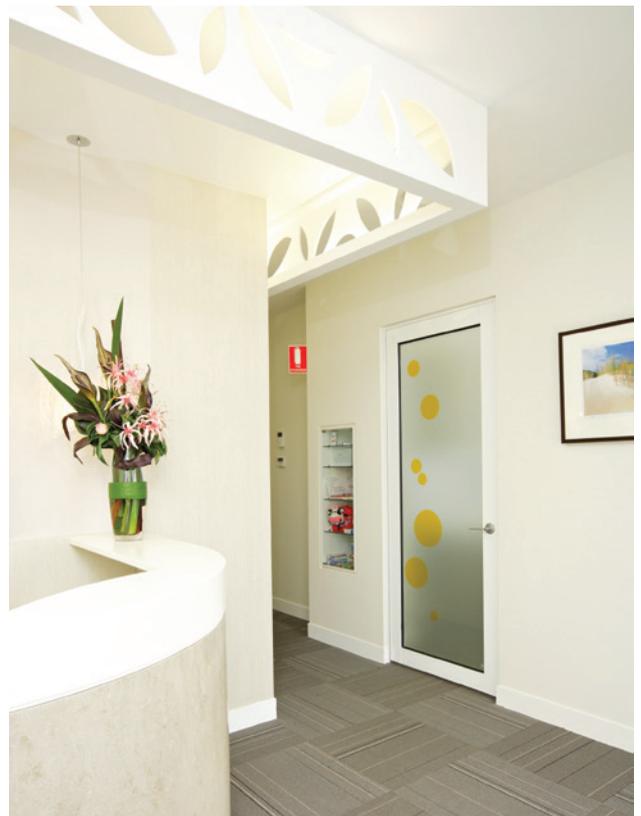
"I initially spoke to Medifit, but actually decided to go with a local architect who as it turned out, had little dental experience," Dr Cheng said. "It became obvious as we proceeded through council approvals that the local architect's expertise was not to the standard required. For example, the original plans supplied made no allowance for disability access.

"So I once again contacted Sam Koranis from Medifit and explained to him the problems I was having and the current status of the project. Sam advised me in a very professional manner that the drawings did not effectively utilise the true potential of the space.

"The original architect designed for 2-chairs, but Sam's initial opinion had been that this should always be a 3-chair practice and that it wouldn't be a problem to accommodate this, keep council happy and comply with the Building Codes of Australia."

Medifit's designers were subsequently also able to address all disability access requirements for the practice as well as introduce many other innovations into the final design.

"I had also researched Medifit when it came to major renovation works to existing old residential buildings. Previous client projects in Armadale and Fairfield entailed similar construction work as my property and these clients had nothing but praise for Medifit's professionalism, quality and service.



“So it was now a very easy decision for me to move camps as I probably should have done in the first instance,” Dr Cheng said. “Once the design process started, Sam’s vision of a 3-chair practice was crystalised. The level of knowledge that Medifit’s staff possess from a design and construction perspective was extremely impressive. They understood every aspect of my business, including the equipment, electrical and plumbing requirements, as well as all of the building codes and standards required.”

The project then moved into the construction phase where Medifit were required to completely remove one of the boundary walls and restump the entire building due to many years of damage from rising damp and dry rot.



Dr Cheng needed the new practice completed and open for trading in just 12 weeks so that business could continue uninterrupted as the lease was due to expire on her old premises.

To compound the difficulty in meeting this deadline, major storm damage occurred at the beginning of the 11th week of construction, only 10 days prior to the scheduled handover. The site was completely flooded and water rose to above the internal floor level causing approximately \$60,000 damage to the completed works.



Summary

The Practice

Principal	Dr Shujia Cheng
The Practice	Caulfield South Dental Surgery
Type of Practice	General
Location	Caulfield South, Melbourne, Victoria
Size	102 square metres
No of chairs	3

The Team

Design	Medifit Design & Construction
Construction	Medifit Design & Construction

Equipment

Units	Belmont Clesta II & Adec 500 chair
Sterilisation	Tuttnauer 2340 EKA Autoclave
X-ray	De Gotzen X-ray & Belmont Phot X-II x-ray
Compressor	Cattani K200
Suction	Cattani Turbo Smart A
Software	Dental4windows

“My heart sank at that stage and I felt we were not going to be able to open for trade,” Dr Cheng said, “but Medifit reassured me that they would pull out all stops to ensure we were open on time. They worked over two weekends and late into the night and met their completion date. I was pleasantly surprised that the damage was covered by Medifit’s insurance and didn’t affect my contract price at all.

“Medifit’s Victorian project management staff were exemplary in their performance and kept in constant communication, as did all the tradespeople on site. I always knew exactly what was happening with the project. This gave me peace of mind that everything was on schedule, even when unexpected challenges arose like the storm damage. The Medifit team took care of everything so I could concentrate on my patients without the added stress of trying to organise the new surgery.

“I was delighted when Medifit met the deadline, which would have been tight under the best of circumstances. My decision to turn to Medifit when I did turned out to be a very wise one.”

Dr Cheng said the staff love the new practice and they take real pride in it, which flows on through their interactions with patients. Having three surgeries instead of two has improved the patient flow, resulting in better productivity and making it much easier to see emergency patients when necessary.

“Our patients keep telling us how inviting and comfortable the new practice feels. They were also pleased to see that we maintained the heritage attributes of the original residential property.

“I am very happy with the way it all came together on time, the design, the colours and the overall feel. Medifit did an excellent job. If you are undertaking such a project, I highly recommend you contact Medifit. I am confident they will deliver a practice that you will be proud of too.”

