



## An oasis in a desert of red dust

**T**he opportunities in dentistry are many and varied in rural Australia. The demand is high and while some new graduates languish in the cities with half empty books and rudimentary dentistry on offer, the opposite is true in the country.

"I graduated in 2002 and in 2005, I started to research opening a dental clinic in rural WA," said Dr Ben Negoescu. "Private health fund, Healthguard (GMF Health), approached me about opening a dental clinic in the gold mining Mecca of Kalgoorlie to help alleviate the shortage of dental services in the Goldfields. The research showed that there were 3- to 6-month waiting periods for dental services in the area and that many Kalgoorlie-based residents were visiting Perth for dental services. An agreement was reached where I own and operate the

dental clinic and Healthguard leases the premises and equipment to the dental clinic. A Preferred Provider Agreement was then established for GMF Health members to gain the best and most affordable dental care.

"I then met with various design and construction companies to explain my expectations and time constraints. Market reputation introduced me to Medifit. I was impressed by their previous projects and by preliminary discussions with principal Sam Koranis and project manager Mark Evangelisti. A joint decision was made by both GMF and myself to employ their services to design and fit out the dental clinic.

"The Medifit design process was excellent and in a short timeframe they drafted a comprehensive set of plans. I was also impressed that they could accommodate

four surgeries and the rest of our wish list in such a small space (only 132 sqm). We all thought it was impossible. The design team impressed me with their knowledge-base of dentistry. Construction was unbelievably quick and streamlined. The surgery was completed in a very short period of time. This was achieved through Medifit's CAD drawn templating system and Mark's efficient management of trades. They also managed to meet our tight budgetary constraints which was a bonus. What I liked was their hands on approach from start to finish."

The site for the new practice was originally two tenancies in an existing medical centre. Medifit demolished the middle wall as well as other defunct internal partitions to create one large space of 132 square metres.



The wish list included four surgeries, a large sterilisation area, OPG room, staff room and waiting area, as well as a reception desk for two staff members and a separate admin and payment consultation area nearby.

The waiting area can accommodate up to 10 people and because there was no requirement for a public toilet to be incorporated into the design, Medifit installed a refresh area housing a basin, cupboards and a mirror. This serves as a refreshing tidy up area after seeing the dentist or as a last minute teeth-cleaning area prior to a patient's appointment.

A large area for storage was a request in the brief. As there was not enough space for a separate storeroom, storage cupboards were innovatively incorporated into the corridor, backing onto surgery three, while still maintaining an active and ergonomic surgery.

The steri room, although an awkward shape, is a good size and maintains its integrity, incorporating 'dirty' and 'clean' areas. It incorporates a full height broom cupboard for cleaning products and more storage shelves. Two Sirona autoclaves, a DAC universal handpiece autoclave and a CEREC milling unit are also located here.

Upon entry, a warm and friendly atmosphere greets the patient. The reception counter to the right is modest and robust using a light timber laminate and stainless steel detailing. The striking purple wall aptly called 'Medicine Man' by Dulux represents GMF's corporate colour. The signage logo fixed to this feature wall presents extremely well in coordinating stainless steel.





The reception counter can accommodate two staff members with space for two computers, a mobile pedestal and a printer. Storage cupboards and a third computer is located at the end of the reception counter.

The admin area is located behind the feature wall of the reception counter. A large consulting desk with casual chairs enables talks with patients about their treatment and payment plans.

Two sweeping curved walls make up the central corridor and create visual interest when painted in complimenting neutral toned colours. From this central corridor, all four surgeries, the staff room and the steri area are accessible.

The staff room is compact in size but still has the ability to have three staff members seated at the bench seat at any one time. The kitchenette features all the standard requirements such as stainless steel sink, fridge, microwave, drawers and overhead cupboards. A soundproof and well-ventilated plant room is located within the staff facilities room and houses two Dürr suction motors and a Dürr compressor.

Floor finishes throughout the practice are both attractive and practical and incorporate essential features such as easy maintenance and long lasting quality. The curved patterns and changes in floor finishes at the reception entry area not only create interest, but also act to protect the rest of the clinic from the harsh Kalgoorlie red dust. Hardwearing entry matting is the first point of contact for the worker's boot, before they step onto timber look vinyl and then finally onto the carpet.

"Building in rural areas is always a challenge," said Medifit Managing Director Sam Koranis, "and in the case of GMF Dental in Kalgoorlie, securing tradesmen would have been even more difficult than usual as work had to be commenced during the traditional Christmas/New Year break to deliver the completed project in February.





## Summary

### The Practice

Principal	Dr Ben Negoescu
Type of Practice	General
Location	Kalgoorlie, WA
Size	132 square metres
No of chairs	3 + 1

### The Team

Design	Medifit
Senior Designer	Geoffrey Raphael
Construction & Joinery	Medifit
Project Manager	Medifit - Mark Evangelisti

### Equipment

Dental Units	Sirona C3+ and Sirona C8+ with Sirona handpieces
X-Ray	Sirona Heliodent DS Intra Oral X-Ray with Sirona Sidexis Digital X-Ray system
X-Ray	Sirona XG3 Digital OPG
Autoclaves	Sirona DAC Professional Class B Sirona DAC Universal Handpiece Sterilizer
Compressor	Dürr
Suction	Dürr VS900
Other	CEREC 3D

“Fortunately, years of experience in the industry have ensured that we prepare for the unexpected and before closing up for the holidays we placed a skeleton crew on standby, just in case.

“The calls went out and within less than a week we had prepared a very tight 6-week construction program, based on working 7 days a week in stifling 40 degree heat. Morale was high and we were all confident that based on past team efforts we would deliver another successful project.

“A combination of tight project management and excellent subcontractor support from both our regular group and Kalgoorlie locals eventuated in another smooth handover and a delighted client.”

“The opening of the dental centre was heavily anticipated by the residents of the Kalgoorlie area,” said Vanessa Bird, GMF Dental Centre Project Manager. “The timely delivery of a superior quality dental centre was paramount to the success of the project.

“Medifit accommodated the requirements of all parties involved and undertook the project with a professionalism and dedication that reflected the commitment of both GMF Health and Dr Negoescu to achieving the key objective.

“It was a pleasure to work with Medifit and we highly recommended them as dental fit-out specialist.”

“Throughout the whole process, the Medifit team was efficient and professional,” Dr Negoescu said. “I was particularly

impressed that Mark and Sam promptly rectified any minor problems that arose even though we were a 7-hour drive east of Perth. My colleagues, Dr Adrian Sue and Dr Tina Choo are also extremely happy in our ‘oasis’ in the desert as are our patients. They continually pay compliments on how much they love the surgery.

“I am the first to recommend Medifit to anybody interested in achieving a high quality project in a minimal amount of time.”

