

In **true** partnership

Significantly expanding a new venture through the midst of a global pandemic is no mean feat, but it is exactly what Dr Peter Hughes and a respected group of dentists and dental specialists have achieved in the past 12 months.

Dr Hughes started working on his ‘True Partnership’ model back in 2017 after studying the various corporate dental groups both in Australia and overseas. As the founder of a dental aggregation company some years earlier and with his management team also having significant involvement with corporate dentistry, Peter and his team felt there was a need for a new approach.

“With dental corporations operational for over 20 years in Australia it is easy to now look back and assess – the good – the bad and the downright wretched”.

The concept of ‘strength in numbers’ has always had merit, but when implemented by different groups, the stated original outcomes are sometimes lost or morph significantly into a totally different business model than what was expected by the dentists joining these groups.

Peter believes what has been missed by many corporations is the unique nature of the dentist/patient relationship.

“A patient does not care what brand is on the door, they care about the relationship they have with the dentist and team who is going to look after them”

Looking back over the past 20 years, there have been those



who have tried to commoditise the profession with head offices run with management teams devoid of any clinical experience. This approach can work well in certain sectors where the public are less attached to who is providing the service they seek, but it is now clearly evident that the vast majority of active dental patients in Australia care deeply about who treats them and stay loyal to their dentist wherever possible.

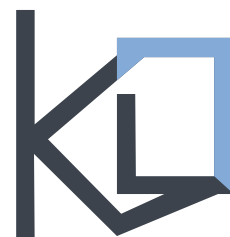
Knowing that a substantial majority of patients want to be treated in a privately-owned dental practice by a practice principal or associate they have got to know and trust over many years, does not negate the fact that privately-owned dental practices can still significantly benefit from better management systems; but knowing this did change Peter’s view of how it should be achieved.

“With other business models I have witnessed, the major incentive for the dentist to join a corporation is the initial pay-out received. Once the euphoria of a large cheque wears off and now working within a highly controlled environment, the passion for building the practice can be lost or in some situations becomes a burden driven by threats of a claw-back. At best, dentists and staff become less passionate than before they joined the group and at worst they become despondent and look forward to the day they are released from their contracts.”

Peter decided the way to harness all the passion a practice owner has, whilst providing the tools to grow and expand with ease was to enter into genuine equity-based partnerships. As partners with non-competing skills, the practice principal can concentrate on clinical activity with full authority and autonomy whilst divesting themselves of the mundane business functions that frustrate just about every dental entrepreneur. This approach promotes continuity of performance.

At the Kikada Lane Dental offices in Richmond, you will find all the functions a successful group needs. A Human Resources department heading up by a person with over 30 years of recruitment and HR experience, many of these years spent working in the dental sector. A finance department, with an extensive dental background and also a marketing department headed up by a person who has worked with hundreds of private practices and many of the dental corporations, thus genuinely knowing how to attract more patients, no matter what type of dental or specialist practice is represented through marketing messages.

The Kikada Lane team have been hand-picked by Peter to ensure ‘real world’ experiences are harnessed and decision makers have the knowledge to support the practice principals and their respective teams.



Kikada Lane Dental

CREATING A TRUE PARTNERSHIP WITH PRACTICE PRINCIPALS

Since inception in 2017, Dr Peter Hughes and the team at Kikada Lane Dental have successfully partnered with Dentists and Dental Specialists in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria.

Having proved the Kikada Lane partnership model to be successfully and equitable, Dr Hughes and his team invite you to explore how a 'True Partnership' could benefit you.

- ✓ Release of Goodwill
- ✓ Reduction in required administrative activities with a focus on clinical service and autonomy of direction
- ✓ Cross referral opportunities and centralised marketing programs
- ✓ Training and development programs
- ✓ Cost and scale efficiencies
- ✓ Growth opportunities
- ✓ Human resources advisory
- ✓ IT support
- ✓ Payroll management
- ✓ Wealth creation through profit share and improved practice value

To find out more register your interest at www.kikadalane.com.au or call (03) 9691 3500 to schedule a private and confidential discussion with Dr Peter Hughes.



Dr Peter Hughes



“It can become incredibly frustrating for a practice principal who has had complete control for years or maybe decades to find themselves trapped within a corporation and having to justify to some ‘bean counter’ why they need a certain piece of equipment or why they want to work with a certain material or choose a certain dental lab. It must be equally frustrating for the ‘bean counter’ not to understand the role a lab can play in the end result for the patient or how a certain piece of equipment can radically change the efficiency and morale of the dentist”

Peter decided early to avoid these potential conflicts and with his ‘True Partnership’ model. All these processes become smooth and easy and driven by what is ultimately best for the most important person in the overall equation – the patient.

The strength in numbers idea works at so many levels for the dental sector. Every private practice has to replicate many of the same business functions; functions that a single dedicated person can do for multiple practices from a centralised office. Servicing many practices across the country also means Peter can attract a high calibre team thus providing better advice, efficiency to each practice as well as saving costs in the process. There is also the important matter of collegiality, providing all the dentists at Kikada Lane access to colleagues around the country they can either refer to or simply seek a second opinion.

Kikada Lane already has a specialist maxillofacial surgeon, specialist orthodontist, dentists highly experienced in placing dental implants, advanced cosmetic dentistry and facial aesthetics, plus plenty of highly motivated general dentists who now have the opportunity to advance their skills within the group.

The ‘True Partnership’ model allows for entrepreneurial associates to become partners within the group and also attracts those dentists currently thinking of one day starting their own practice.

“The wonderful thing about genuine and legal equity to share is that it can be sold or distributed easily in the future. When one of our practice principals decides to retire, then his or her equity can be sold to a dentist looking to own an established well-run practice, with none of the worry and risk associated with opening a new practice”

The final piece to Peter’s business model was to iron out the inequity often found in the value of a dental practice and the distribution of profit. Through the increased efficiency of everyone within the group working to their strengths, the profit of each location increases over time. Also, as a group of successful practices each location gains a higher capital value, which in other business models is harvested by the corporation. In Peter’s ‘True Partnership’ model both the profits are distributed in line with the partnership arrangement and the value of the equity is also proportional.

There will be no rebranding of practices, as it is very evident that the goodwill of a dental practice is built at a local community level and not through corporate advertising. The team patients know and love are not disrupted and practice principals are left leading their practice whilst off-loading tasks and functions that have little to do with the patient experience.

Peter and his team would like to invite motivated practice owners from around the country to enter into discussions about his ‘True Partnership’ business model, plus also enter into discussions with entrepreneurial dentists who would like to work in highly successful and amazingly equipped practices with the view to a future partnership position. ♦

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Melbourne Dental & Dental United Group now, in partnership with the world’s leading manufacturers, offers a full range of servicing and installation of the best equipment including chairs, compressors, suction, X-ray and autoclaves.

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