



## Apollo Health fills gap in WA dental services

By David Petrikas

**P**erth's new Apollo Health Medical Centre is helping re-shape the provision of dental care for both private and public patients in that state.

Since opening on July 1, 2013 in Armadale Shopping Centre, the multi-disciplinary practice incorporating dental services, imaging, pathology, allied health, and general practice medical services has been overwhelmed with patients.

The new venture has already proven itself as a successful model of co-provision of services by helping fill an unmet need in public patients - marked by long waiting lists at the Armadale public dental clinic and a lack of alternate service providers.

Apollo Health is able to cater for those Government patients eligible for subsidies that allow them to be treated in private

practice - as well as patients with pension cards that are not covered by a health fund, who receive a special discount at Apollo Health.

As such, the new 3-chair practice has helped ease waiting lists and provide more timely care for patients entitled to receive various Government assistance schemes.

Practice manager, Wendy Janes, said the new practice already had 500 new patients - many of them walk-ins - and was receiving additional referrals from Armadale Hospital as well as emergency cases. The ability to provide additional emergency treatment has proven especially useful given the pressure on Armadale's public dental ward.

Ms Janes explained that some public health patients had been on long waiting lists for certain procedures and others

fell outside the net because they required crown-and-bridge or dentures (which are not covered by the public dental system).

She added that the Apollo Health practice was blessed with the services of Dental Clinical Director, Dr Lawrence Chan, who was an extremely experienced dentist and international lecturer who was able to offer a very broad range of services.

The UK-Qualified dentist with some 30 years experience has operated in private practice in the UK and Perth. He is also an international lecturer and member of the International Team for Implantology with a special interest in implantology, oral surgery and cosmetic dentistry.

As such, Apollo Health is able to offer a wide range of services including general dentistry, oral surgery, prosthodontics, periodontics and paediatric dentistry.



Ms Janes said some waiting times of three years plus at public dental clinics were not uncommon and some patients holding Authority forms for government-provided services had been waiting for up to five years for treatment.

Others requiring crown and bridge or dentures not covered by Government clinics were happy to pay private fees to get much-needed dental work done without having to travel into Perth.

Apollo Health has also been named an HBF Preferred Provider which means children were treated gap-free, resulting in more families coming into the new practice.

“It’s really surprising how popular we’ve become in such a short time and we received another 100 new patients in just a couple of weeks,” Ms Janes said.

This is a reflection of the pent-up demand for dental services, together with the convenient location inside the Armadale Shopping Centre, together with its attractive design, state-of-the-art dental equipment and a friendly atmosphere among staff.

The overall medical centre featuring large reception and waiting areas was designed by Masterplan (Perth) with the dental areas designed by Perth dental fit-out specialist, Dentpro of West Perth and fitted out with the latest dental equipment.

“The staff love working in the new surgeries with their state-of-the-art top-of-the-range equipment and are looking after it really well. This is reflected by the care and quality of the work of our dentists,” Ms Janes said.







“Staff members appreciate the fact that everything is new and it works. We’ve had absolutely no problems with any of the equipment. Happy staff means a happy workplace and that encourages patients to come back.”

Apollo Dental Clinical Director, Dr Lawrence Chan, agreed on the importance of using the best quality dental equipment, which was behind the decision to choose A-dec.

“I believe that you don’t skimp on equipment because you need good tools to perform good dentistry. I’ve seen this so many times in both the UK and here, where people try to save money and the results reflect that as it’s hard to work without the right tools.

“The chair we have chosen for Apollo is the top-of-the-range A-dec 500 with W&H instruments and Soprolife intraoral camera. Everything on the delivery system and the bracket table is designed to be within easy reach for you and the assistant.”





Dr Chan added that the whole chair design was very ergonomic: “If you look at the back of the chair, it’s quite ‘slimline’ and that’s why I like the A-dec design. It is not ‘bulky’ like some chairs that can be very cumbersome; the A-dec chair is very slick. It also doesn’t occupy a massive amount of space and you can get very close to the patient and maintain a good work position.”

Dr Chan is also a keen advocate of the latest advances in technology, which lead to the choice of Acteon’s SoproLIFE intraoral cameras with integrated caries detection system for the practice. SoproLIFE uses fluorescence-based technology to highlight demineralised dentine and caries.

“A picture is worth a thousand words. The SoproLIFE is a very effective camera for diagnosis and you can use it as an education tool as well,” Dr Chan said. “If I am doing reconstructive work, I take a pre-op and post-op photo which is a feature of this camera that I use a lot.

“A lot of patients are gob-smacked when I finish the treatment. I find the camera very useful and I also don’t have to ‘sell’ the treatment to patients. You just explain everything and the patients can see and understand why you suggest a particular treatment plan and very often say yes to that option.”

Dr Chan added that the intraoral camera images could also form part of medico-legal consent. “Before you do anything, you take a picture and then at the end, you take another image. In that way, patients cannot say you have filled the wrong tooth or whatever, so it’s a very useful tool to have.”

The three current surgeries at the Armadale clinic are each equipped with A-dec 500 dental units, Acteon X-Mind X-ray generators, Sopro PSP!X phosphor plate system and Sopro intraoral cameras. There is also a Progeny OPG machine. Provision has been made for a fourth surgery as the practice expands.

Advice on the surgery layout and equipment was provided by Bill Elsgood of Dentpro and partner business, Dental Intelligence, which supplied and installed the equipment.

## Summary

### The Practice

Practice	Apollo Health
Practice Manager	Wendy Janes
Clinical Director	Dr Lawrence Chan
Type of Practice	General
Location	Armadale, Perth, Western Australia
Size	78.5 square metres (clinical areas only)
No of chairs	3 + 1

### The Team

Design (overall)	Master Planners, Osborne Park, WA
Design (Dental)	Dentpro, Perth
Senior Designer	Bill Elsgood
Construction	Dentpro
Project Manager	Bill Elsgood
Installer	Dental Intelligence, West Perth

### Equipment

Units	A-dec 500
Sterilisation	W&H Lisa Fully Automatic with LisaSAFE barcode printer & Assistina 301 Plus automated handpiece maintenance unit
X-Ray	Acteon X-Mind with Acteon PSP!X PSP scanner
OPG	Progeny Vantage
Digital Imaging	SoproLIFE intraoral camera with caries detector
Compressor	Cattani K300
Suction	Cattani Tandem Turbo SMART B, C2T
Software	Sopro Imaging and Dental4Windows

