

Site Selection Checklist for a New Dental Practice

1. The catchment (who will walk through the door)

- ☐ Population size and growth in the surrounding suburbs (new housing estates, subdivisions, planned developments)
- ☐ Mix of residents: families, young professionals, retirees, which affects your service mix
- ☐ Nearby schools, workplaces and childcare facilities that could feed patients
- ☐ Whether you can realistically draw from existing contacts, such as a former practice, referrers or your own network

2. The competition

- ☐ Count the dental practices within a few minutes' drive and note how many dentists work in each
- ☐ Check their opening hours, whether they bulk bill under any schemes, and how busy they look
- ☐ Look at their online reviews to find gaps (long waits, poor communication, no after-hours)
- ☐ Note any recently opened or closing practices, and any signage for new ones
- ☐ Decide what will make you different (hours, services, specialty, technology)

3. Visibility and access

- ☐ Street frontage, signage rights and visibility from the road
- ☐ Easy parking for patients, including accessible parking
- ☐ Public transport nearby
- ☐ Foot traffic, and whether it's near a supermarket, medical Centre, pharmacy or shopping strip
- ☐ Wheelchair and pram access (ramps, lifts, doorways)

4. The premises

- ☐ Room for the number of surgeries you plan now, plus space to add one or two later
- ☐ Space for sterilization, reception, waiting area, staff room and storage
- ☐ Existing plumbing, power and compressor space, or the cost of adding them
- ☐ Lease term, options to renew and rent review clauses
- ☐ Whether the landlord allows dental use and the fit-out you need
- ☐ Whether another dental practice has previously operated there (existing fit-out can save money)

5. People and lifestyle

- ☐ Is there a local pool of dental assistants, hygienists and receptionists to hire?
- ☐ Is the commute and area somewhere you want to work for years?
- ☐ Are there potential associates or referral relationships nearby (GPs, orthodontists, specialists)?

6. Numbers to collect and give your accountant

- ☐ Quoted rent and outgoings
- ☐ Fit-out and equipment quotes
- ☐ Number of surgeries the site can fit
- ☐ Expected fees for the area, based on local practices you've researched
- ☐ Your best estimate of how quickly patients will build up

7. Before committing (needs professional input)

- ☐ Lease reviewed by a solicitor
- ☐ Council and planning approvals for dental use confirmed
- ☐ Fit-out costed by a dental builder or supplier
- ☐ Finance options discussed with a broker or lender

A simple way to compare sites

Score each section from 1 to 5 for every site and total them. Don't pick on the score alone, but a big gap between two sites is usually a useful signal. Low scores on **catchment** or **competition** are hard to fix later, while premises issues often can be.

This checklist is general information only and does not consider your personal circumstances. It is not financial, tax, legal or investment advice. Please speak to a qualified professional before making decisions about your practice.