

# Is there life after dental practice ownership?

Dentists often put off selling their practices because they are concerned about life after dentistry.

What will they do with all those extra hours, how will they cope with leaving behind the identity that has defined them for decades? This series of articles explores the very busy lives of some of Practice Sale Search's clients, former practice owners who have embraced post-sale life.

**Name:** Julie Monis-Ivett OAM

**Age:** I was 70 when I sold.

**Graduated:** 1975 from Adelaide University

**Practice Owned:** Mount Barker Dentists

## Brief Career Summary:

My husband Steve was the first the first person I sat next to in my very first lecture. We were both 17. I didn't remember meeting him, but we got together by the end of first year and we've been married for 49 years.

Steve set up our first practice from scratch in 1978 in Mount Barker.

At the time, I was working in a high-end practice in the city with two wonderful people who mentored me. As a woman, I wanted to establish my own identity and so I worked separate to Steve while he built the practice.

By the time I had our third child, I was working part time and I felt it was too difficult to work across two practices, so in 1991, after 14 years, I quit working in the city and worked solely in our practice.



Working with Steve in Mt Barker worked really well. Over time, we grew the practice to one full time and six part-time dentists, with many staff. Steve and I were working part time and 40% of my work was implant dentistry (I had done courses since late '80s). I loved it.

## Why did you decide to sell?

The admin never stopped, even when we went on holidays. It became exhausting, very rewarding but very demanding. We were turning 70, in my mind it was time.

We wanted to have more holidays; I needed flexibility in life, we have two grandchildren in Sydney and it became hard to pop in to see them.

## When and how did you decide to sell?

Steve and I started out on different timelines; he wasn't ready to sell when I was. But after a while we ended up on the same page.

Simon Palmer had come recommended by some other friends of ours in Adelaide. He had helped them sell their practice and they were very happy with his services.

Simon was able to negotiate something that worked out well for us, he knew all the personalities involved and he was so good at helping with the logistics.

## What are your plans post sale?

I was lucky to only work two days at our practice, which gave me the time to be involved in the kids' school, Zonta (a local service organisation) and start humanitarian foundations. I am looking forward to spending more time in the humanitarian work once I get breathing space from the practice.

## Do you have any career regrets? Is there anything you would have done differently?

Not really. I loved what I did, getting to know patients over 40 years is a privilege. Maybe I should have started the processes towards retirement 1 - 2 years earlier.

## Tell us about the foundations that you are involved with?

The Birthing Kit Foundation Australia (BKFA) provides Clean Birthing Kits to communities in need around the world and grew from a Zonta project. I went to my first Zonta meeting, a women's service/advocacy organisation, in 1987 (with a 2-week-old baby). A member who was a



doctor brought the idea of a Birthing Kit project to the meeting. Twice as many babies will die than mothers by cutting umbilical cord with dirty knives, surfaces not being clean, catching infection, birth attendants not using gloves. The kit includes everything needed to provide a clean birth for a woman birthing in a developing country: a 1-metre sheet of plastic, soap, gloves, sterile blade, gauze, cords.

In 1999, the first kits went to Papua New Guinea - they took 100. Within months they were asking for 1000 and then 10,000. We're now in 20 countries (like DR Congo, Ethiopia, Malawi, Uganda, Cambodia, India) and have distributed over 2.8 million birthing kits made by volunteers in Australia. 1.7 million (60%) made by Zontians. They go to the most remotes parts of DR Congo, where there's been war and the women have no options. Many kit distribution projects are accompanied by a Community Development Project with whole villages transformed by the project. [www.bkfa.org.au](http://www.bkfa.org.au)

As Project Administrator for the BKFA I got to know Dr Luc Mulimbalimba and his organisation Mission in Health Care and Development (MHCD), raising money for worthwhile healthcare, education and infrastructure causes in DR Congo. We started MHCDSA (the Australian Support Association) to support this work. We gather the resources and send 40 foot container of medical, educational, and humanitarian goods each year, funds depending.



## How could Australian dentists help?

### With the Birthing Kits:

BKFA: They can hold a birthing kit assembly day as a team building exercise. The cost is \$5/kit, or \$1000 for 200 kits, e.g., 1000 kits = \$5000. [BKFA.org.au](http://BKFA.org.au) [www.bkfa.org.au/get-involved/pack-kits/#form](http://www.bkfa.org.au/get-involved/pack-kits/#form) There is a simple Assembly Day manual to follow. All donations are tax deductible

Or they can make a donation and the money will go to our many Traditional Midwifery training programs. [www.bkfa.org.au/get-involved/donate-now/](http://www.bkfa.org.au/get-involved/donate-now/). They can contact me on [JulieM@bkfa.org.au](mailto:JulieM@bkfa.org.au) for more information.

### With the MCHDASA

[MHCDSA.org.au](http://MHCDSA.org.au) // [mhcdata.org.au/donate/](http://mhcdata.org.au/donate/) All donations are tax deductible.

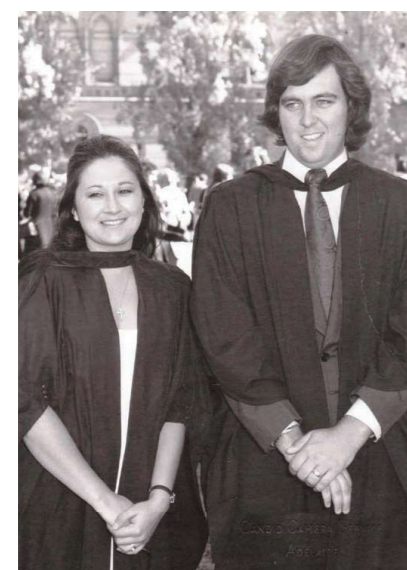
Currently, as the only dental treatment available is extractions, we need more extraction forceps, LA syringes, elevators, all hand instruments, a digital X-ray machine package, mobile suction and high-speed units or other equipment, like simple dental chairs. Local anaesthetics, needles, gauze etc.

If making a donation - it would help for donations to go towards a BPR Swiss mobile and portable dental unit to be able to offer more dental treatment or towards the transport of a container with donated dental resources. Our annual report tells our story. [mhcdata.org.au/who-we-are/reports/](http://mhcdata.org.au/who-we-are/reports/)

I've been to DR Congo twice to do volunteer dentistry there. Should you want to volunteer around South Kivu province at the Luvungi hospital, we need a chat. Contact me on [mhcdata@gmail.com](mailto:mhcdata@gmail.com) for more information. We are a fully audited organisation. ♦



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