

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: Flaviana Benedetti

Age: I was 72 when I sold.

Graduated: 1973 Melbourne University

Practice Owned: Whittlesea (about 45km from Melbourne CBD)

Tell us a bit about your career history

18 months after I graduated, my husband (also a dentist) and I did a 10-day tour of Victoria and southern NSW to find the right place to settle. We wanted to go rural, but not remote.

We decided to buy a block of land next door to a medical centre in Whittlesea and built a purpose-built building that had the potential for 5 surgeries. The practice was successful, and we were inundated from the start.

In the early '90s, my husband was working in the city, the kids were becoming teenagers and it made sense to live closer to the city. So, I sold the practice in Whittlesea (but not the freehold) and we moved to Ivanhoe and opened a practice there. The Ivanhoe practice also grew rapidly, and I ended up with an employee dentist, a full-time hygienist and 4 chairs.

In 2011, after 16 years, the guy who bought my practice in Whittlesea decided to leave. I was left with the real estate



without a tenant, and so I decided to kick start the practice again.

Why did you sell?

In 2014 I got breast cancer, and it made me take stock and realise that it was time to slow down. I had 6 months of chemo, followed by radiotherapy.

I sold the Ivanhoe practice in 2015 and focused on Whittlesea. It was going well, until Covid restrictions started the week before my 70th birthday, and things became difficult.

I decided I wanted someone else to handle the process, so I contacted Practice Sale Search.

What have you been doing since you sold?

We have a house in France, and I am planning to spend more time there and with our 3 daughters who live overseas in Monaco, Barcelona and Hong Kong. When I owned the practice and we used to visit, I would always have to be in contact with the practice and my accountant. I was away, but never totally. Now that I have sold the

practice, when I travel it is someone else's problem.

I'm still working a day a week at the practice. I have had to cut down my time because my mother isn't well. It's my responsibility to look after her, so the sale came at the right time, because I can now give back to mum what she's given to us. Had I been working full time like I used to, it would have been impossible. The plan now is more France and more time with family. I never took time off even to have children, now is the time.

I have heard two of your daughters (the DJ duo NERVO) are quite famous for their music

Yes, the twins had classical music training; they had beautiful voices and they were offered a spot with Opera Victoria, but it wasn't what they wanted. They were hand hunted as DJs, went off to London, and after a few years had a #1 hit. They now travel all over the world, and DJ'd at the World Cup.

It's not my kind of music - the music is awfully loud! I am always amazed at the crowds they get, a sea of people waving. ♦