

Location, location, location!

The importance of a great location for a successful dental practice.

Having been involved in the set-up stages of hundreds of dental practices over the last 20 years, we know how difficult and stressful it can be to find new and suitable premises. Whether the surgery is a start-up, or the practice has outgrown its existing space, there are very few purpose-built facilities available on the market. Without the availability of an ideal location, dental practices are forced to consider other types of existing buildings, with the location dropping down the list of priorities. The practice may then struggle to establish itself as a successful business, just because it is in the wrong location!

Dental surgeries operate in a wide variety of buildings. Some practices adapt first floor residential flats or convert a disused public convenience. Some practices use 300-year-old manor houses, or commercial units on an industrial estate. This raises these primary questions:

1. Where is the best location for me?
2. What is the ideal building for my practice?
3. Who is best able to advise me whether a particular building meets my requirements?



Although additional considerations such as planning permission, change of use, disabled access requirements, building regulations and fire safety must be considered the actual location is still of vital importance.

In our experience, we find that practices who follow these guidelines for location enjoy the most success in providing both a good return on investment and attracting the best offers when an owner is looking to sell or retire.

1. **Consider your patients.** Find out where your patients are located and pinpoint the areas they visit frequently to give you an idea of the perfect location. For example, if your customers shop at Marks and Spencer's rather than Tesco you can identify which location will be more beneficial for your business!
2. **Look for a busy high street shopping location.** With many traditional shops closing down due to changing shopping habits, increased competition from out-of-town retail parks and internet shopping, securing a high-street location is becoming more achievable. Even some of the major banks are reducing their high-street branches to cut overhead costs. Consider your location carefully and the type of shops you want to be close to; a site near a coffee shop is sure to provide high footfall levels.
3. **Look for a shop in a popular location.** Most shop units provide plenty of space for good patient access. They can easily be divided into a reception, a waiting room, surgery rooms, staff areas and decontamination and plant rooms. They are also likely to include nearby parking facilities, increased footfall and provide a highly visible presence for the practice.



4. **Approach your local dental dealer for advice.** They are likely able to give their opinion as to the suitability of the premises you are considering before you commit to the purchase. Initially, they will be able to work with you to provide preliminary equipment budgets. They are also likely to provide budget costings for associated building works and should be able to manage the project through to completion.
5. **Consider location more important than suitability.** It may seem impossible for a specific building to accommodate a dental practice, however, with a professional lay out design process, a suitable plan is usually found. The location of your practice, as opposed to the suitability of the building, is one of the most important considerations for the success of your business. Focus on building a patient base in an excellent location with the option of relocating or expanding in the years to come.

In conclusion, if you are just starting to look for a new location we would encourage you to begin your search sooner rather than later, as it can take a lot of time and effort to find **the right location**. If your practice is located above a shop on the high-street, we would recommend that you look at every pavement frontage property available nearby, as this could provide your practice with an excellent opportunity.



By choosing the right location dental practices can expect increased patient volumes, greater client and employee satisfaction, and higher profitability.

Get in touch with Anglian Dental on 017630849990 or info@angliandental.co.uk to arrange a free detailed feasibility site visit.