

Best Practice

Brought to you in the interest of better practice

The health advocate

Associate Professor John Gullotta credits solid financial advice as the foundation for his success

Selling the dream

How BOQ Specialist helped Health Networks Australia to open a new research centre in Melbourne

A million to one

Discover how Dr Athula Gunasekara set up two specialist centres and earned reward points in the process

Room to grow

Buying a business, equipment and property has been a breeze for Dr Steve Soukoulis in Adelaide, thanks to simple solutions



BOQ SPECIALIST

Distinctive banking

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Welcome

As 2014 draws to a close, we have the opportunity to reflect on past achievements, as well as gear up for the year ahead to ensure both you and your practice are in the best possible financial shape.

It's been an especially busy and productive year for BOQ Specialist. We've been on a new branding journey and expanded our range of personal banking and practice finance solutions. The evolution of our offering further reinforces our commitment to becoming the primary bank of choice for the personal and commercial banking needs of all our professional clients.

Of course, while we've made some changes, our clients have been and will always be at the heart of what we do. As many of you will know, we have delivered distinctive banking solutions for healthcare professionals for over 20 years. We continue to draw on the specialist skills of our bankers and their knowledge of individual markets to offer a more premium and tailored offering.

This premium service has recently evolved to include a holistic banking package, reflecting our understanding and appreciation of the multiple roles and responsibilities you have—in your personal and professional lives. At BOQ Specialist, we're committed to having a deeper understanding of both. As a result, we're delighted to offer you a personalised banking experience, combining a home loan with a credit card and an everyday bank account.

This consolidated service, which optionally includes an offset account on variable loans and overdraft facility, represents the efficiency and value we believe you are seeking—a one-stop shop for all your banking needs and a fresh alternative to the major banks.

In this edition of *Best Practice*, we explore the challenges of opening an emergency veterinary hospital in regional New South Wales; how a Sydney cardiologist opened two specialist centres and earned a million Qantas Points in the process, and how BOQ Specialist assisted a Perth veterinarian couple to buy their own home.

We hope you enjoy this edition of *Best Practice* and the holiday season. If we can help you in any way, please give us a call on 1300 131 141. □



Barry Lanesman



Andre Karney

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

Barry Lanesman

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

Andre Karney

BOQ Specialist in the community



Joining forces

BOQ Specialist has commenced a partnership with the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) to become a preferred financial partner. This agreement demonstrates its long-term support to general practitioners and will be mutually beneficial to BOQ Specialist clients and RACGP members.

The RACGP is Australia's largest professional general practice organisation and represents urban and rural general practitioners. BOQ Specialist fully supports the RACGP mission which is to drive the success of GPs, and provide assistance to deliver better patient outcomes.

As a preferred financial partner, BOQ Specialist will provide exclusive benefits to RACGP members to enhance the value of their membership. These benefits include various discounts and offers on a range of personal finance solutions, including credit cards, everyday bank accounts, home loans, and car and personal loans. BOQ Specialist will also continue to sponsor RACGP events, publications and specialist groups. □

For more information, please visit boqspecialist.com.au/RACGP

Giddy up! BOQ Specialist celebrates suppliers

BOQ Specialist was proud to host a series of Melbourne Cup week events for medical and dental industry partners and suppliers. The first marquee events held under the new BOQ Specialist brand took place in Sydney, Melbourne, Newcastle and Brisbane.

Sydney guests celebrated Cup Day in style at Circular Quay's Museum of Contemporary Art, with a relaxing afternoon of great food and refreshments on the side deck. Highlights included a photo booth, prizes for best dressed attendees and a spirited Calcutta hosted by consultants Tony Kalmin and Nick Tagg.

Melbourne's event took place on Oaks Day at the picturesque Stables of Como in South Yarra. Victorian consultant Trevor Knowles was MC for the day and a great time was had by all. □



Top tips to ensure you get the most from your life and income protection insurance



Mark Sacks, Insurance Adviser from Experien Insurance Services, gives us the top five tips for getting the most out of your life and income protection insurance.

1 A claim should not be a fight, we will do the work for you.

The value of insurance is never felt more than at claim time. This is when dealing with an insurance adviser (as opposed to dealing direct with an insurer) is so valuable. Advisers help with such things as, arranging a client's claim forms and delivering it to their house, arranging a death benefit payment for the grieving family or assisting with many other complex aspects such as arranging probate. It is essential that the manager of your insurance has strong relationships with insurers and their claim managers are able to ensure your claim is managed in an efficient manner.

2 Some clients can save \$400k in premiums by choosing the right structure.

You have a choice of how to structure your premiums for life insurance, income protection, total & permanent disability (TPD), business expenses or trauma—by choosing between what is known as 'stepped' or 'level' premiums. This decision can impact on your overall premium cost savings. The stepped premium option can

often seem superior in the short term. However, stepped premiums increase each year, as you get older, and the actual increase amount will depend on your age each year. Level premiums generally remain little affected as you get older. You pay more upfront but end up paying a significantly lower amount over the long term. In fact, over the long term, a level premium structure can sometimes cost four times less over the life of a policy.

3 Your needs change all the time and your policy may no longer be optimal. When did you last review?

As you get older and your life changes, so do your insurance needs. It's important to regularly assess your level of coverage and make sure it's still adequate. Being underinsured could leave your family vulnerable should anything happen to you. If you're getting married, divorced, starting a practice or increasing your debt levels, it may be time to review your coverage levels and your beneficiaries. And insurance products change regularly. Make sure you don't get stuck on an old policy that becomes out of date.

4 Buying direct could cost you more and get you less!

Getting your insurance over the counter or "direct" can sometimes appear to be a quicker solution. However, you may not be aware of all the product details, know what's best for your needs/circumstances or have missed a fundamental inclusion/exclusion of the policy. Direct life insurance may be very restrictive and more expensive than products that are tailored for your unique needs.

5 Insurance from super funds is often not enough.

Insurance cover offered through super funds can be a good starting point, but they are often just that. Many are set at a low and basic "default" level with all members in mind, so does not take your personal circumstances and profession into consideration. That's why you should always assess whether the level of cover is enough to support all your financial commitments. Relying on default cover from your super fund may make a significant difference to the amount you receive at claim time. Some people are shocked to sometimes find their cover in such funds reduce when they get older rather than increase. □

Contact Experien Insurance Services to discuss your insurance on **1300 796 577** or **info@experien.com.au** for an obligation free consultation on the best insurance coverage for your needs.



Man on a

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Photography by Richard Birch

Associate Professor John Gullotta says strong, old-fashioned-style financial advice is one of the keys to the success of his community practice.

It may be the public health achievement that Associate Professor John Gullotta says he is most proud of from a 22-year career in medicine and medico-politics, but he admits its fulfilment did not make him universally popular.

In fact, so volatile was the reaction to this career-defining moment of almost a decade ago that memory of it still makes him visibly cringe. "Through my role as Australian Medical Association (AMA) NSW president, I was involved in stopping smoking in pubs and clubs. That was a great thing but a lot of people were not happy about it," recalls Associate Professor Gullotta who was practising in the Sydney suburb of Matraville.

"I received a few letters and angry phone calls, let me tell you. But I am still glad we did it and, in time, I think everyone realised it was a great public health initiative."

That was back in 2004, just as Associate Professor Gullotta, now aged 49, was taking on the AMA role, a position he would hold for two years. At the same time, he was made an Adjunct Associate Professor at Sydney Medical School within the University of Sydney. It's little surprise that in 2007, he was appointed Member in the Order of Australia (AM) for his outstanding service to medicine.

These days, Associate Professor Gullotta is a committed health advocate for a range of issues, such as keeping the public and private health system strong, increasing GP numbers, preserving the role of the GP as the leader of the healthcare team, and support for the AMA-proposed Medicare co-payment scheme.

Being an advocate for better health is a mission Associate Professor Gullotta has been on throughout his life, long before he opened the doors of his Matraville practice 22 years ago.

If there's one theme that dominates in a conversation with Associate Professor Gullotta, it is about being of service to his community.

As the only son of two pharmacists, Associate Professor Gullotta followed family tradition and studied pharmacy at the University of Sydney. After receiving his degree, he attended the University of Newcastle to study medicine.

However, it was the lessons he learnt as a boy watching his parents taking care of clients across the chemist counter that struck deep, and continues to inform his approach to his work.

The Gullotta family has been taking care of the Matraville community since his parents started their pharmacy in 1964. The family has lived in the area since the 1950s. When Associate Professor Gullotta wanted to open his own

on

practice, he took over an existing one above their pharmacy in 1992, where he has been open for business ever since.

“With me, it was never about wanting to change the world but always about trying to make a difference to the community and to the community’s health,” he recalls. “In a way, I learnt that it’s all about family. For my parents, clients were always like an extension of family as people would come in and ask for advice.

“I grew up around that and saw they were in a position of trust. People were coming in, asking everything from ‘I have a rash on my hand’ to marital advice. Their role in the health of the local community was huge.”

Associate Professor Gullotta’s Matraville Medical Centre is open five days a week and, in keeping with its community focus, continues to offer home visits.

He believes the secret to being successful is to always remember two important rules—patient loyalty is the key and being readily available means everything.

“It is all about being accessible,” he says. “It is also learning to be adaptable to your clientele, whether they are elderly or young, or whatever background they are from.

“I speak Italian so I have a lot of Italian patients. We also have a lot of people from Egypt and Malta, and now a large number of Asian people are moving in. That is a real cross-section and you need to be across all of that, being aware of what they may need.”

Providing a community health service with the reality of managing a modern business is a constant juggling act, taking care of the balance sheets, at the same time as taking care of patients. It has been the support from BOQ Specialist and its earlier incarnation as Investec, he says helped keep the business on a smooth path. Associate Professor Gullotta has been a client of the group since 2007.

“The important thing is to have a relationship with an organisation that’s like the good old-fashioned bank managers back in the old days,” he says. “That’s the thing about my contact at BOQ Specialist, Paul Catanzariti. If I need anything done, I ring Paul and it happens, and it is done with highly competitive interest rates and excellent service.

“Over the years, he has helped me with investment loans, overdrafts, home loans and numerous car loans for all my family members.

“I recently bought a car for my wife Mara, and Paul said he would be there with a bank cheque. The car dealer said, ‘Nah, bank people don’t do that’. But Paul turned up and we took the car that day. The dealer was amazed!”

In terms of good business, one of the most valuable lessons Associate Professor Gullotta has learned in recent years is appreciating the value of the service you offer.

“You need to understand that you charge what you are worth,” he says. “That is a real challenge for some because, very often, medicine attracts people who do not like to charge for what



“The important thing is to have a relationship with an organisation.”

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR JOHN GULLOTTA

they do. The reality is that everyone does it—a plumber charges for service, as does an electrician. It is important to provide the service and not be afraid to bill what you are worth.”

Away from his beloved Matraville general practice, Associate Professor Gullotta is also in big demand with another community—local and international music stars and VIPs who visit Sydney. He has been ‘tour doctor’ to the likes of Human Nature, Delta Goodrem, Pink, Fleetwood Mac and more recently, Bob Dylan. He also worked on the latest season of the TV series, *The Voice*.

For his medical services to promoters and management companies behind some of the biggest music acts to visit Australia, Associate Professor Gullotta earned the nickname, the ‘Rock Doctor’.

However, he insists that whether he is treating a famous rock star or an 80-year old Matraville local, the care is no different. “This is a specialised area and confidentiality and discretion are



Associate Professor John Gullotta, aka the Rock Doctor.

important," he says. "Some of the older artists who are touring are in their sixties, and as they get older, they get the same ailments everyone else gets."

At the mid-point of his career, Associate Professor Gullotta says that ensuring the future care of his community is being looked after remains his focus. He hopes there might be a third generation of Gullotta medical practitioners to do the job.

"I married my wife, Mara, an orthoptist, four years ago. It would be nice if we had a child and I could pass on the baton but if it doesn't happen, then I will keep teaching at university," he says.

"Remaining involved in medical politics is also important as is working to keep both persuasions of government honest. Our health system is excellent, but you can't rely on just saying that. People have to work at it to keep it that way." □

To find out more about BOQ Specialist's tailored financial solutions for medical, dental and veterinary professionals, call us on **1300 131 141**



Paul Catanzariti

BEST PRACTICE

According to BOQ Specialist's Paul Catanzariti, providing a personal service that matches with the clients' needs is the most effective way forward in creating a business relationship that works.

It is, Paul explains, delivering on the simple concept of what service is meant to be about.

"Having dealt with doctors, dentists and vets for over 13 years, old-fashioned service is still a priority for me," he says.

"I am always happy to provide a level of service to my clients that is almost lost by most other banks. Being part of a large bank, a lot of clients don't expect the personal service that I provide, and it is always appreciated."

Maintaining contact with his clients, such as Associate Professor John Gullotta, at the various stages of his career as well as his personal life has, Paul says, proven invaluable.

"I have known John and his family for many years, and our relationship is friendship rather than just business. As with all my clients, it's a pleasure to go above and beyond the expected service."





Home sweet home

Opening up an issue of *Best Practice* magazine changed the lives for the owners of Kingsway Veterinary Centre and their young family.

They had been to almost every bank in Perth and by the time they discovered BOQ Specialist and got in touch, veterinarian husband and wife Drs Innis Cloete and Marilet Hebler were just three days away from losing their deposit and their ideal home.

"We tried all our options," recalls Dr Cloete. "We had three different brokers working on it. I tried all my

contacts—I even contacted a client of the surgery, as well as going directly to other banks—but it felt like doors kept getting slammed in our faces."

It's not like the veterinarian couple just turned up at the first house they saw, poked around for five minutes and decided to make an offer. The decision to buy a house had been a hard one to make, and they had done a lot of research beforehand, even speaking to a broker about their options and about getting a loan.

"We had a property in the UK, and when we moved to Perth, we rented it out," says Dr Cloete. "Earlier in the year, that property became vacant and we decided to sell it, but not to buy anything in Perth just yet—until we'd had a good look at the market and what it had to offer."

Then one Sunday, after another round of disillusioned house-hunting, the parents of three young children decided to throw in the towel.

"To be honest, we were deflated," Dr Cloete admits. "We stopped short at one house and decided this would be the last one we looked at and, as it goes, this was the one we fell in love with."

This house had everything they wanted, and because of the enormous amount of interest, Drs Cloete and Hebler put in an offer the following Monday and—to their surprise and elation—the offer was accepted.

With a 10 per cent deposit, two good incomes and a newly purchased practice that had been going strong since 2002 in its current location in Perth's northern suburbs, they thought, 'We are practice owners, we have our own business—a mortgage shouldn't really be a problem.'

But that wasn't the case at all.

"We started looking into getting a mortgage and it soon became clear that because of our situation—we'd not been in business for a year and didn't have an audited year's accounts—it became evident it wasn't going to be as smooth a ride as we were hoping for," says Dr Cloete.

At the point of desperation, having been turned away by one bank after another, and told that in order to be considered, they'd need to agree to a minimum of nine-and-a-half per cent interest for the loan, and pay over \$1000 to have their business independently audited



Happy homeowners Drs Innis Cloete and Marilet Hebler.

and accounts verified, the family decided enough was enough.

"This was right near the end," Dr Cloete says. "That evening, we were going to tell the real estate agent that we'd tried all our options and we couldn't proceed with the sale.

"Then, just by pure chance, there was a magazine that was dropped on my desk," he continues. "Our practice is next to a medical surgery that's got a dental practice attached to it, and without even looking at the address—we get a lot of magazines—I opened it and started looking through it."

The magazine was *Best Practice*, and after reading just one page, Dr Cloete saw a chance.

"I called straight away and asked to speak to the person who had helped the people in the article, but they said we needed someone local. They were in Sydney and we were in Perth, but they said someone from the Perth branch would call me back.

"Jason Briggs called me within 20 minutes. We met with him and—do you know what?—48 hours later, we had our mortgage. This was incredible ... absolutely incredible."

The meeting took place at their practice early in the morning, just after the kids had been dropped off at school. "That suited us," Dr Cloete recalls. "Life is pretty full and hectic, so Jason came out on his way to work early in the morning to do a bit of fieldwork and to get a bit of information. The next time we saw him, he had the paperwork in his hand.

"That man [Jason Briggs] went to the end of the earth to get it sorted. I was so comfortable with the whole process, I knew I could get on with doing my job, with my family, with running the practice. I knew Jason was taking care of us."

Now sitting in his new home, surrounded by family and utterly relaxed, Dr Cloete muses on the good fortune that led him to stumble on BOQ Specialist. "It's only by pure accident that this fell into place—me picking up a wrong magazine and reading an article. But the rest is history. We are in the house right now and absolutely over the moon.

"We now have some plans to have our preparation area in our surgery revamped. We're looking at having that done early next year, and BOQ Specialist will definitely be there to help us with finance." □

"We met with him and—do you know what?—48 hours later, we had our mortgage."

DR INNIS CLOETE



Jason Briggs

BEST PRACTICE

When BOQ Specialist's Jason Briggs met with Drs Innis Cloete and Marilet Hebler, he knew time was of the essence. He was determined to give his clients some degree of hope.

"I went out and just listened to how they were feeling," says Jason. "They'd been in business for less than one year, and because of this, none of the other banks would touch them, not even the bank that had given them the original business loan.

"But when I saw the situation, I knew that I could make it work. When I got back to the office, I made sure I rang through to our credit department straight away and bounced it off them to give Innis and Marilet some comfort.

"Having come to us with a 10 per cent deposit, we could have used a number of 90 per cent products. (If they had come to us now, we could have used the BOQ Specialist Banking Package but this became available only recently.) We opted to use a split loan funded jointly by BOQ Specialist and Adelaide Bank for whom we are a mortgage manager and therefore knew we'd be able to get the loan through quickly and with little hassle.

"I sent the application through and stayed on top of it the whole time, following up each day to make sure everything was tracking along, and we got the approval within two days," says Jason. "We basically put them up the front of the queue, realising it was important and urgent. We just got it done, which is what you need to do sometimes."

To find out more about BOQ Specialist's tailored financial solutions for medical, dental and veterinary professionals, call us on **1300 131 141**

Don't get stuck in traffic with your next car purchase

For most working professionals, having a high-quality reliable car is a necessity. But the time and effort involved in purchasing a new car can often be quite off-putting, particularly for time-poor professionals. Luckily, there are a few simple things you can do to speed up the process of buying your next car.

Like most things, you'll save time—and money—in the long term by taking the time to research and plan ahead before you go browsing. Research makes, models and colours before you get to the dealership, so you already have a good idea of what you want and an approximate price.

Once you've decided on a shortlist of vehicles, book in a test drive so you can be sure you like the feel of your chosen car. You should be able to do this over the phone or online before you visit the dealership, to ensure you won't be waiting around on the day.

If you're short on time and want a 'whole package' service that takes care of your finance and car shopping needs in one, there's also the alternative of a car buying service. This option takes all the hassle out of the process by providing services such as car selection advice, arranging test drives and delivering your chosen car for you.

Get the green light on your finance

It's also important to ensure any loans or leases you need for your vehicle are going to be appropriate for your needs.

There are several common types of car finance so it's important you understand the benefits of each and work with a finance provider who will take your budget, lifestyle and financial goals into account.

BOQ Specialist can do just that and can develop an option that best suits your individual needs. This means looking beyond an interest rate and also considering things like the initial fees, dealer discounts and any other costs.

The finance structure of your loan is important—BOQ Specialist can tailor a loan to suit your cash flow, with flexible terms from six months to five years, a choice of repayment options and the ability to approve car loans of anywhere from \$2 000 to \$150 000, on both new and used vehicles.

You may also consider the benefits of using your credit card for your car purchase. With BOQ Specialist's Signature and Platinum credit cards, you can purchase your new car and then roll the expense into a fixed term finance contract, allowing you to earn points* on the initial purchase and with selected finance contracts, the repayments.* □

5 top tips for buying fast and smart

- 1 Ask for the 'drive away' price when negotiating with your car dealer—this includes costs such as delivery charges, registration and stamp duty, which could add significantly more to the price you are quoted initially.
- 2 Pick your purchase time strategically—there are certain periods during the year where it can be easier to negotiate a cheaper price.
- 3 Organise insurance—make sure you have pre-purchased insurance before you leave the dealership with your car. Comparison websites will help you to get the best deal.
- 4 Be aware of standard features—dealers will often have optional features fitted into a display model car, so ensure you are not forced to pay for these additional features if you don't want them.
- 5 Read the fine print of your warranty—many dealers offer extended warranties that aren't transferrable between dealers, so will lock you into servicing your car with them. Make sure you're getting a deal you're happy with if offered an extended warranty.


BOQ SPECIALIST

Distinctive banking

BOQ Specialist is the credit provider. Terms and conditions, fees and charges and lending and eligibility criteria apply. We reserve the right to cease offering these products at any time without notice. BOQ Specialist is not offering financial, tax or legal advice. You should obtain independent financial, tax and legal advice as appropriate. *A 1.5% processing fee applies. Points are earned on eligible purchases only. Fixed term finance contract is to be approved prior to purchase.



Riding high

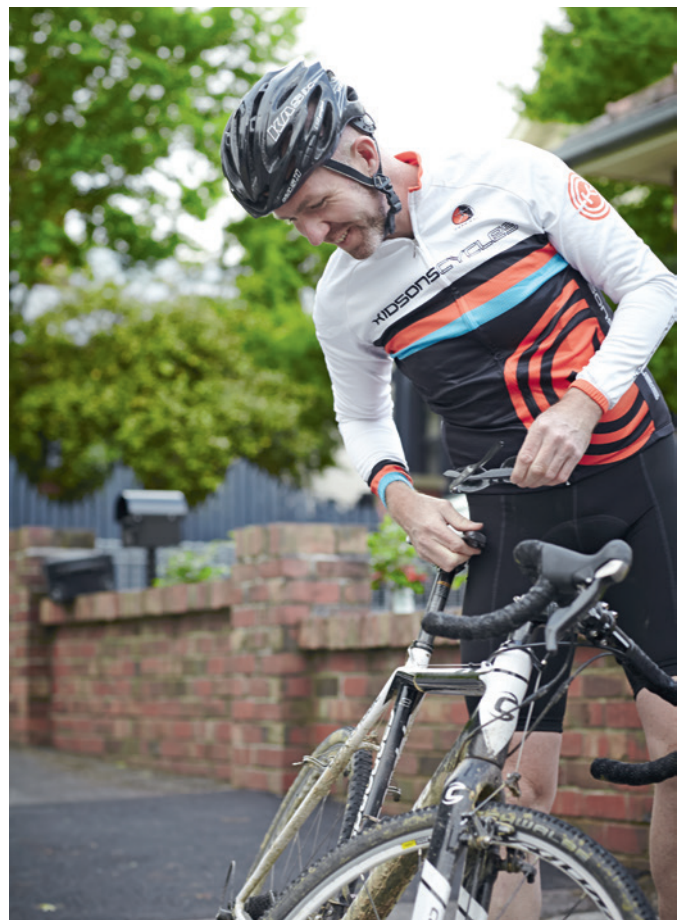
Dr Josh Collingwood enjoys doing things at full speed, which is why his relationship with BOQ Specialist fits like a glove.

Some time in his mid-twenties, Josh Collingwood decided that medicine would be his back-up plan. At the time, he was a professional cyclist. He'd been competing in cycling events since he was a kid—he'd even won a world championship—but he knew he needed a back-up plan. Dr Collingwood grew up in the central New South Wales town of Wagga Wagga. "I wasn't really interested in school," he says with a grin. "I came from a family of cyclists, including my dad and my mum's dad. So I was immersed in a cycling culture. I spent most weekends in Sydney, Melbourne or Canberra at cycling events."

Education was "never really on the agenda" but he read a lot about exercise physiology and training. That, he explains, "evolved into a curiosity about the body and how it could work better for me. Even now, my interest in medicine is more in the area of human function than disease."

At 17, he travelled to Europe with the Australian cycling team, and at 18, he won the world championship. "I was exposed to a whole new world," he says, "and I learnt that if you work hard and plan well, and sacrifice everything, you can succeed."

"In those days, road cycling was quite a small sport here. So, it was a bit like a Frenchman taking on the Aussies in cricket. It was a big deal. In Italy, where cycling was a lot more popular, I achieved mini-celebrity status. I remember walking into a tailor's



Dr Josh Collingwood was a professional cyclist.

in Tuscany and the guy recognised me from TV. Nobody knew who I was in Australia.”

In his mid-twenties, Dr Collingwood began to question just how much longer he was prepared to carry on as a professional cyclist. “Performing once or twice a year to a really high standard isn’t that difficult,” he explains, “but once you become a professional cyclist, you have to perform at that level perhaps 100 times a year. You’re also sleeping in hotel rooms every night, constantly travelling, not having weekends off, or sick days, or holidays. It’s a massive commitment. Meanwhile, all my friends had finished their university degrees or become tradies and had jobs and personal lives. So, I asked myself whether I was getting enough out of this to justify what I was giving up.”

That’s when Dr Collingwood considered studying medicine. The fact that he hadn’t been interested in school work didn’t worry him a bit. He wasn’t intimidated by the academic rigour or the workload. In fact, he recalls, he “found studying medicine pretty easy”.

“It’s much the same as cycling in many respects. You visualise your objective and work backwards from it. I think that’s where a lot of people go wrong. They look at what they want, they see where they are and they ask, ‘What’s the next step?’ But in sports training, you always plan your steps backwards from the goal. It really works.

“Sport is the best training anyone could have for university, in terms of discipline, confidence, teamwork, setting goals and making plans. My sports training had given me discipline and the ability to overcome performance anxiety, so I didn’t worry too much about exams. You have to put a lot of hours in and give up some weekends, but I was used to that from cycling. I figured that thousands of people become doctors every year but very few people become elite athletes, so the odds of my succeeding in academia were pretty high.”

Josh Collingwood did succeed. He’s now a resident at Ballarat Base Hospital, has recently been accepted into the training program for rehabilitation medicine and is studying for a Master’s degree in sports medicine.

“Hopefully, I’ll go into sports medicine or human performance,” he explains. “Both rehab and sports medicine are very goal-focused, so I’m interested in working with that. I think of everyone as an athlete, and I’m there to coach each one. If you’re a grandmother with a hip problem and your goal is to walk to the bus stop, which is 400 metres away, that’s not trivial. You’ll need to train for that and I’ll help you with strategies to get there more efficiently. The only difference is that athletes have numbers on their backs.”

“It sounds clichéd, but the team at BOQ Specialist were amazing. I really didn’t think you could get this kind of service these days from a bank.”

DR JOSH COLLINGWOOD

Dr Collingwood has been living in Ballarat for three years now and, he says, he’s become “a bit of an advocate for regional Australia. Country life is more chilled out than city life and I have more disposable income because my cost of living is lower. I have more time to ride my bike and hang out with my mates because it takes no time to commute.

“I also like living in a community rather than a suburb—there’s a village lifestyle here—but it’s only a couple of hours from Melbourne, and it’s a cycling hotspot. There’s some awesome mountain biking and road cycling around here.”

Dr Collingwood likes Ballarat so much that he’s recently bought a house there. “It’s a cute little Art Deco-Tudor kind of cottage in the old high street, and it was a bargain,” he explains. “If I’m still here in 10 years’ time, it has the potential to be my specialist practice. So, I was looking ahead when I chose it.

“Krissy at BOQ Specialist organised the finance for me within a week. It was so fast—signed, sealed, delivered—and I didn’t have to leave Ballarat. I didn’t even have to go into their office. The house was bought via emails in my tea breaks. It was seamless.

“I have friends who’ve bought houses recently and none have had this kind of treatment. It sounds clichéd but the team at BOQ Specialist were amazing. I really didn’t think you could get this kind of service these days from a bank.”

You’d think that renovating the new house, studying and working at the hospital would be keeping Dr Collingwood busy enough, but he still finds time for sport. “At the moment, I’m running a lot. I’ve been training for a half marathon and I just finished an 80-kilometre hike. I ride three or four days a week, I do 100-kilometre mountain bike marathons twice a year to keep fit, and I coach a few regional cyclists, too.”

Dr Collingwood has what he calls an “appetite for adventure”. He explains: “I think discontent is my greatest strength and weakness. It gets me out of bed every day and keeps me pursuing new dreams and ambitions, but it also makes me restless. So, I try to test my boundaries, challenge my ideas and my mental and physical limits. My life’s my hobby. If you’re willing to change and push yourself, you can create whatever life you want.” □

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Krissy Hamilton

BEST PRACTICE

"One of the most important things we do is to support our doctors. As part of that service, we visit local and regional hospitals, such as the one where Dr Collingwood works, and we put on a lunch where doctors can talk to us personally about the products and services we offer. It's nice to meet everyone in person and answer all their questions," says Krissy Hamilton of BOQ Specialist.

"Dr Collingwood came along to one of those lunches and afterwards, he touched base with us and told us that he wanted to purchase a home in the area, close to the hospital. He realised that, in the long term, it would be cheaper for him to purchase a property than to pay rent. But Josh had come to medicine later in life and relocating had been expensive, so he didn't have enough cash for a deposit.

"We offered Dr Collingwood 100 per cent finance. Because of his circumstances, he qualified for this particular product, which really helped him. A little while later, he sent me photos of his house and we organised an overdraft so he could do renovations. After the renovations, we'll revalue the house and pay out that overdraft.

"He's excited about that and I'm excited too," says Krissy. "He's a doctor. They work hard. Why not reward them?"

One in a million

Losing parents at a young age triggered a calling to the medical field for Dr Athula Gunasekara who has set up two cardiovascular centres in Sydney this year.

The impact of losing one's parent at a young age can often propel those left behind to excel at their careers, and that was precisely what happened with Sri Lankan-born Dr Athula Gunasekara. At the age of 12, Dr Gunasekara was left utterly devastated by the loss of his 45-year-old father to cancer, prompting him to consider a career in medicine in a bid to save lives.

"It was a difficult time for the whole family," he says. "After that, my mother passed away in her early forties, and those moments confirmed to me that I definitely wanted to be a doctor. It was a calling. I knew I wanted to make a difference."

"Despite all the adversity around me at the time, I managed to do well in high school, and won an Australian Government scholarship to study medicine at the University of Queensland for six years in 1992. I was 18."

In the final year of medical school, he got an opportunity to spend time at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in the USA. He spent time specialising in oncology, but he eventually experienced a change of heart after witnessing too many deaths at a tender age.

"Oncology was tough," recalls Dr Gunasekara. "Watching so many people lose their lives while I studied there for six years was not easy."

He eventually decided to specialise in cardiovascular health, where he knew he could make a difference. He was determined to become a procedural cardiologist.

"That first year was extremely challenging," he says. "English was not my first language and I was adapting to a different culture all on my own. I was also dealing with leaving behind my brother and sister in Sri Lanka. Being away from family was hard but I was determined to study hard to become a doctor."

"When I qualified, my first job was cardiology at the Prince Charles Hospital in Brisbane. I found it interesting and quickly realised I was making a difference—I was helping to save lives. After all, that's why you get into medicine."

Indeed, the affable doctor realised he was gifted at medical matters of the heart and immersed himself in more studies for another year. He focused on interventional cardiology at Westmead Hospital, Sydney, before completing his training at the prestigious Mount Sinai Hospital in New York where he honed his expertise in endovascular procedures and structural heart disease for three years.

"The effect of saving a life is instant. You can treat someone having a heart attack immediately, and extend lives for another decade. This gives me enormous satisfaction as a clinician," says Dr Gunasekara.

"I am pleased that I can play a part in helping to improve the health of individuals. And one of the parts I love the most about my job is the human interaction and meeting people from all walks of life."

Dr Gunasekara eventually took his skills back to

Australia in 2009, working at a string of group practices while continuing to train with experts in interventional cardiology in the USA, Japan and Europe.

He is now considered a leader in the field, and is able to offer highly specialised diagnostic and interventional techniques.

Earlier this year, he set up two practices specialising in interventional cardiology in Sydney's suburbs of Blacktown and Bella Vista, thanks to a generous and swiftly organised funding package from BOQ Specialist.

"It's a bold move for a doctor. It's difficult to branch out on your own."

DR ATHULA GUNASEKARA



Dr Athula
Gunasekara is a
leader in the field
of interventional
cardiology.



Caitlin Curry

BEST PRACTICE

"In this instance, the appeal of BOQ Specialist was the speed with which we organised funding for Dr Gunasekara," says Caitlin Curry of BOQ Specialist.

"The 45-year-old cardiovascular specialist had been dealing with a high-street bank for funding when the deal collapsed at the eleventh hour with financiers changing the terms and conditions, leaving the doctor without funds as his practices were being set up.

"We moved quickly for him. He contacted us at 9am last April in a little bit of a panic and seven hours later, we had organised and approved funding for him."

Investigations into projections and previous business history were swiftly carried out by the banking and finance arm of the bank.

Caitlin adds: "Speed was crucial in this case and we made sure his suppliers were paid and equipment installed in the practices that day.

"Dr Gunasekara is doing really well and has patients from both Blacktown and Bella Vista areas where he has previously worked in various practices.

"His reputation has seen clients follow him and we knew that historically he was in a strong position. That's why we granted the funding."

Dr Gunasekara was also introduced to the Signature credit card that allows clients to earn one reward point for every dollar spent.

Caitlin says: "We managed to sort out his finances and what's more, he earned himself more than one million reward points putting his spend through his Signature card."



Dr Gunasekara's new venture, the Sydney Cardiovascular Centre.

The Sydney Cardiovascular Centre offers a comprehensive service including diagnostic and interventional procedures delivered with state-of-the-art technology by experienced cardiologists and support staff.

In addition to adult general cardiology, Dr Gunasekara's expertise includes complex coronary intervention such as peripheral vascular intervention and percutaneous therapy for structural and valvular heart disease.

As a specialist in performing coronary angiography and coronary stents via radial artery access, Dr Gunasekara is an expert in re-opening chronically occluded arteries with specialised novel techniques.

Now aged 45, the specialist who has a young family and lives in northwest Sydney is also competent in using special devices and techniques for complex and calcific coronary artery lesions. They include rotational atherectomy/cutting balloons and intra-vascular ultrasound to facilitate coronary intervention and optimising results.

His training in CT coronary angiography, a non-invasive imaging modality, is crucial in making clinical decisions for intermediate- and high-risk asymptomatic patients.

It's also noted on his website that he's highly specialised in procedures such as watchman device implantation, and renal sympathetic denervation.

Talking excitedly about his new venture, Dr Gunasekara explains: "It's a bold move for a doctor. It's difficult to branch out on your own but many of my city patients have remained fiercely loyal. I suppose my reputation has stood me in good stead."

He adds: "What I love is the interaction with patients and the diversity of people you meet and of the job itself. I love my job—making people better and ultimately saving lives. My mission is to enhance the wellbeing of our community through commitment, compassion and excellence in cardiovascular health care." □

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BOQ Specialist diversifies product portfolio with new banking package

Making everyday banking easier for healthcare professionals



BOQ Specialist recently unveiled its new banking package, putting together a number of products together with the goal to make banking as simple and straightforward as possible for its professional clients.

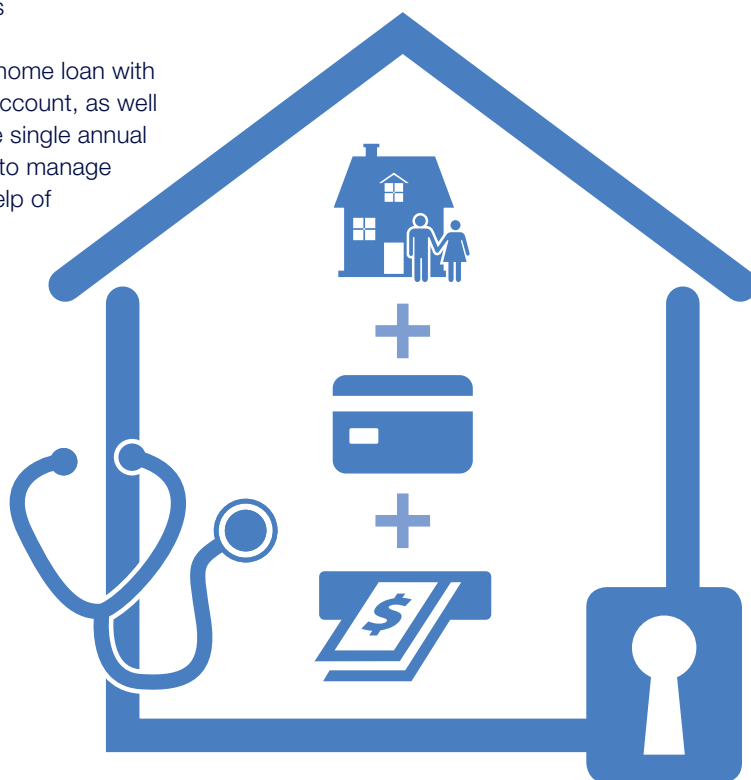
The banking package combines a home loan with a credit card and an everyday bank account, as well as some optional extras, all under the single annual fee of \$395 p.a. It also allows clients to manage their finances in one place with the help of a dedicated financial specialist.

According to BOQ Specialist's Chief Operating Officer & Head of Products, Brent Zurowski, the launch of the banking package is a milestone in the bank's commitment to improve everyday banking.

"The package delivers our clients a comprehensive banking offering, complementing the strong commercial offer that we already provide to them."

"As experts in the medical finance industry, we have a unique understanding of our clients' needs. We are bringing much needed competition, providing an everyday banking solution that for the first time offers a true alternative to the major banks for healthcare professionals."

There really is no reason to bank anywhere else.



Features of the BOQ Specialist banking package:

- Choice between fixed or variable rate home loans
- The ability to borrow up to 100% Loan to Value ratio (LVR) saving clients money by not having to pay lender's mortgage insurance (LMI)
- Optional offset account for variable rate home loans
- A Platinum credit card with premium rewards and benefits, with the option to upgrade to Visa Signature.
- Up to five loans in the one package.

- Everyday banking with the One Account, providing a competitive interest rate on credit balances and an optional overdraft should you need it (subject to credit approval).
- 24/7 assistance via BOQ Specialist's Client Service Centre



BOQ SPECIALIST
Distinctive banking

The issuer and credit provider of these products is BOQ Specialist. Terms and conditions, fees and charges and lending and eligibility criteria apply. All BOQ Specialist Banking Package benefits are subject to the BOQ Specialist Banking Package Terms and Conditions. We reserve the right to cease offering these products at any time without notice. Any advice is of a general nature only. We haven't taken into account your objectives, financial situation, or needs when preparing it. Before acting on this advice you should consider if it's appropriate for your situation. You should obtain and consider the BOQ Specialist Banking Terms and Conditions from www.boqspecialist.com.au/banking before making any decision about whether to acquire the product. BOQ Specialist is not offering financial, tax or legal advice. You should obtain independent financial, tax and legal advice as appropriate.

Buy and Cell

Looking for a reputable financier with experience in the medical field was easier than expected for Health Networks Australia when they wanted to open a new research centre.

When Ross Williams needed finance for a groundbreaking new stem cell research centre—that could change the nature of modern medicine—he didn't take any chances.

“BOQ Specialist understands the

medical field and medical practitioners, and their systems and procedures are structured to cater for their needs,” says Mr Williams, the general manager of Health Networks Australia. “The approval process was quick and straightforward and the ability to draw-down funds during construction and fit-out was exactly what was needed during this process.”

Mr Williams leads a privately owned Australian company specialising in the ownership and management of allied health practices. He is confident the stem cell research centre located in Box Hill, a suburb of Melbourne more commonly associated with Asian cuisine than medical breakthroughs, will be at the forefront of regenerative medicine—a rapidly growing and emerging field.

“The Melbourne Stem Cell Centre (MSCC) doctors wanted a dedicated centre for this specialised stem cell treatment, covering areas for consulting, treatment and laboratory,” he says. “This project is special because stem cell research and treatment is such new biotechnology.”

Leading the team is medical director Dr Julien Freitag, who has a thorough understanding of the research, firstly as an expert in the use of biological therapies to aid healing in various musculoskeletal conditions/injuries, and secondly as a professional triathlete. He insists the importance of this research, as well as the funding that BOQ Specialist supplied to create it, can't be overstated.

“It is conceivable that the reparative properties of stem cells may change the way in which we practise medicine,” Dr Freitag explains. “Stem cells, due to their ability to develop

along the lines of various tissues, have held immense promise. Our evolving understanding of illness, injury and the disease process has seen a focused effort on how we can stimulate repair and healing. Importantly, there are now a growing number of registered international clinical trials assessing the clinical application of stem cells in various areas of medicine.”

In conjunction with Magellan Stem Cells and Monash University, it took Mr Williams three years of planning to bring the centre to fruition, and while the process was challenging, it has been one of his most rewarding projects to date. “When you bring together commercial, clinical and technological elements, it is satisfying to bring patient treatment to the market place in an ethical and scientific way.”

The centre will be specialising in the study of osteoarthritis, a degenerative condition that Dr Freitag describes as “crippling” and a “national health priority area in Australia”.

“Of all the emerging clinical conditions that threaten society in the broader sense, osteoarthritis is among the most important,” he says. “Recent figures estimate that at least 3.85 million people are affected with arthritis across the Australian community, at a cost to our economy of greater

“BOQ Specialist offers a hassle-free finance facility that allowed funding for all fit-out and equipment.”

MR ROSS WILLIAMS

than \$23.9 billion each year. Conservative estimates suggest a 58 per cent rise in the incidence of symptomatic osteoarthritis by 2032. Worldwide, osteoarthritis is considered to be the fourth leading cause of disability.”

Knowing the importance of the research, and the huge ramifications it could have for treatment in the future, Mr Williams had to figure out how to finance the project. One of his first priorities was that it had to be a smooth process. That's when BOQ Specialist entered the frame.

“BOQ Specialist offers a hassle-free finance facility that allowed funding for all fit-out and equipment,” he explains. “Because it was so simple, we then had the time to focus



Dr Julien Freitag, medical director of the Melbourne Stem Cell Centre.

on other issues involved in the establishment of our new practice.”

Although Mr Williams had never used the services of BOQ Specialist, he knew its reputation and standing in the industry was such that he had no concerns in approaching it. “Many of the doctors involved had used BOQ Specialist for similar financing,” he explains. “Their professionalism and experience in the medical field made the whole process very easy,” he says.

When asked if this was his most exciting project, taking into account the ramifications this centre could have on the future of medicine around the world, Mr Williams gives a measured response, knowing the fledgling nature of the research.

“Stem cell research is in its early stages and we need to understand that the technology has not been widely validated,” he says. “Once we start to get positive results from our trials, we will then start to get excited. The work needs to be done and we are committed to get to that point. Once we have achieved that, we will see the commercial viability of ventures such as ours being successful.”

While the research is in its infancy and the outcomes might be uncertain, one thing Mr Williams is sure about is the continued partnership between Health Networks Australia and BOQ Specialist in the future—a partnership that has been vital in the creation of the centre up to this point.

“MSCC is already looking to expand its facility at Box Hill with additional consulting space and laboratory capacity, and we will be using BOQ Specialist again to assist with this expansion,” he says.

Watch this space. □



Craig Spiegel

BEST PRACTICE

“Given this was a new venture, it was critical to work alongside the client to ensure we delivered the best outcomes in an efficient and timely manner,” says BOQ Specialist’s Craig Spiegel. “Ross provided the details of the business and an approval was forthcoming a day or two later.”

Despite not having worked with Ross before, Craig was able to tailor a package to meet the needs of Health Networks Australia. It was a quick process since Craig has over 20 years’ experience dealing specifically with the dental and medical profession.

“We put in place a facility that enabled the practice to pay suppliers on a progressive basis,” Craig says. “After suppliers had been paid, we then converted the facility to a lease agreement. In addition, we have put in place our Signature credit card that enables the client to earn reward points on their monthly repayments and manage their cash flow by taking advantage of the interest-free period.”

When asked about additional services that could be provided, Craig replies, “With the release of our new banking package, no doubt we will be able to assist all the directors with their personal finance and banking needs.”

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In case of emergency

Veterinarian Dr David Tabrett has spent much of his career looking after emergency patients. After opening a hospital in Newcastle, NSW, his greatest challenge has been educating clients about the value of emergency veterinary medicine.

For much of the last 15 years, as he has trained and focussed in the emergency veterinary field, Dr David Tabrett has been gradually teaching vets and pet owners about the differences between general veterinary practice and emergency veterinary medicine.

In his personal life, for instance, Dr Tabrett visits a GP whenever he is feeling ill, and this GP is somebody he respects and admires. "However, if I was ever hit by a bus, I would not be looking for my GP," he says. "I'd want a specialist

emergency doctor who has seen those sorts of injuries many times before and who immediately knows what is required to bring me back to full health.

"As a branch of veterinary medicine, the emergency and critical care field has expanded greatly over the past two decades, and I have always found this clinical side intriguing. I try to communicate to people that emergency medicine is not general practice done fast. We have a different focus. We have a different problem list and different solutions and so on."

In fact, it was an emergency of a different kind that led Dr Tabrett into this field. After graduating from the University of Queensland 25 years ago, he worked in a mixed practice in the New South Wales's Hunter region for five years. The young vet then leased a practice, which he ran on his own for several years. However in August 1996, his girlfriend (now wife) was involved in a serious car accident. She

Photography by Karl Hofman





needed a great deal of support during the long rehabilitation period, meaning Dr Tabrett didn't have time to run the practice.

So, he handed it back and took on locum work for several years. During this period, he worked in what he describes as "every practice in Newcastle". He was introduced to the many challenges of working in a veterinary clinic and found himself drawn to emergency veterinary medicine.

"Then I worked in a specialist veterinary hospital in Sydney for two years because I wanted to learn the ropes and get an idea of how they run," the 47-year-old says. "In Newcastle, we had 30 vet clinics that were on call every night but nobody offered 24-hour care. It seemed ridiculous to me that nobody offered around-the-clock emergency care. That is what drove me to do it."

He originally looked into a co-operative business model. But when he discussed this idea with a trusted colleague in the industry, her response was that it had been discussed a decade ago and would never work. "I just thought, 'Okay then, I guess I will have to do it myself,'" says Dr Tabrett. And he did.

"Prior to setting up an emergency veterinary hospital, most local vets were on call throughout the night," he says. "To have an emergency hospital to which they could refer their patients meant that they could deliver better care during the hours they were at work, rather than working a 10-hour day, being up half the night and then going back to the clinic the next morning. I had done this myself. I had been on call every second night during the time I leased a practice and it was exhausting. That was a big drive for me."

In May 2004, Dr Tabrett and four business partners opened the Newcastle Animal Emergency Centre and although growth came more slowly than originally thought, the private, stand-alone emergency centre became a welcome addition to the Newcastle veterinary landscape (it now takes referrals from 95 per cent of vets within a 45-minute driving distance). The work he had taken as a locum proved to be exceptionally valuable as it meant he already had a relationship with most of the potential referring vets. He had also been heavily involved with the Newcastle branch of the Australian Veterinary Association, of which he is currently president.

The next business challenge would present itself once Dr Tabrett began to look further into the idea of future strategy and growth. Having so many partners on board made change extremely difficult, if not impossible. As a result, much of the past decade has been spent negotiating with partners and buying them out. It wasn't until the middle of 2014 that he finally took full control of the business and began to institute the changes he had been planning for many years.

A new specialist veterinary facility, known as the Newcastle Animal Referral & Emergency Centre, has now been launched under the management of Dr Tabrett. It gives a local place of referral for specialist work, as opposed to Sydney.

"The next two years will be critical for our circumstances and our growth," says Dr Tabrett, who also teaches TAFE vet nursing students emergency and critical care, as well as hosting a weekly radio show called PetChat. "The success of the Newcastle Animal Referral & Emergency Centre is likely to

"We have a plan and a set of goals and we all know where we want to be in 10 years."

DR DAVID TABRETT

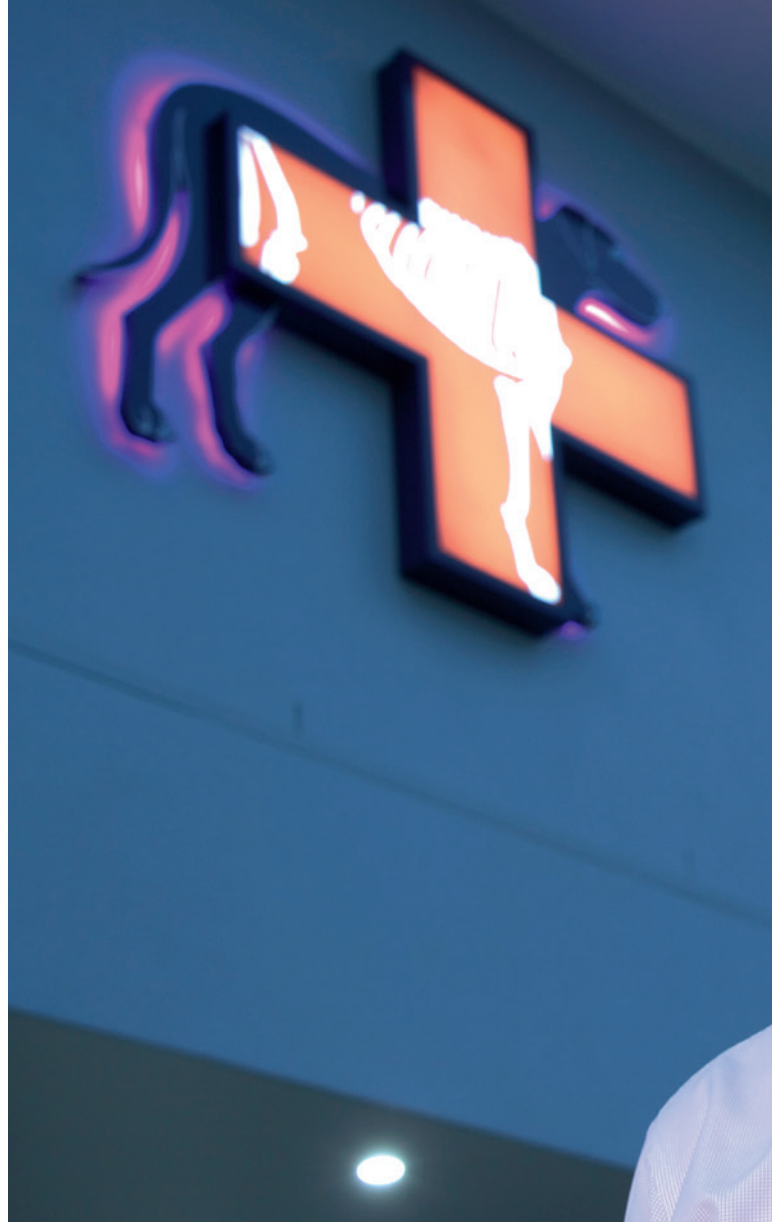
attract competitors. There are entities, both corporate and privately owned, that are probably looking at Newcastle as a growth opportunity. For us to retain our foothold, we need to remain

focused. We have to fulfil on the services both pet owners and referring vets expect. We have to put in place the people and the systems that can deliver the service aligned with our values and culture, and we have to continue to build on the relationships with the referring hospitals that have been sustaining us for the last 10 years."

The addition of specialist referral services takes the business's catchment area from a 45-minute drive out to a two-hour drive. So, as well as a heavily changed and growing business, Dr Tabrett is now dealing with an entirely new set of clients, as well as several new members of staff.

"We're in the middle of a huge change process," he says. "We have restructured many of our operating systems and changed the way our pharmacy works and we're about to change our practice management software. We decided it would be a good idea to do everything at once."

"We have a plan and a set of goals and we all know where we want to be in 10 years. At the moment we're tracking well but we're still vulnerable. If we can get the important things in





Dr David Tabrett, owner of the Newcastle Animal Referral & Emergency Centre.

place in the next two years, they will probably act as a strategic deterrent to competitors.”

As the business leader and the architect of the change, Dr Tabrett is very aware of the importance of constant “fanatical verbalisation” of his vision for the practice, but he has found it easier to focus on building a specific culture within the business—a culture of respect.

He and his staff, Dr Tabrett explains, played around with various mission statements for the new business but kept coming back to respect. “Respect is the thing that is really important to me. It doesn’t matter what somebody’s job is, or what the task is, everybody’s job and everybody’s task deserves respect,” he says.

“Staff and others related to the business must respect what we have laid out as the way forward and, of course, we will support our staff in their own growth because we respect them. Our purpose is ‘respecting humanity by improving animal welfare’.

“Veterinary science is all about relationships. We are obsessive about the health of our relationships with referring vets, with pet owners, with suppliers including BOQ Specialist and with our staff. That, as far as I am concerned, is the secret to success.” □



BEST PRACTICE

As a financial specialist in the medical, dental and veterinary field BOQ Specialist has enjoyed a professional relationship with Dr David Tabrett for over six years. David Keeling says the emergency veterinarian is a visionary in his field, respected as an entrepreneur and demonstrating a sense for business that has always inspired confidence.

“Dr Tabrett has had a vision for a long time to set up an animal specialist hospital in Newcastle. It has not always been easy to achieve this vision, but over the years, he has gradually been acquiring the rest of the business.

“Prior to this new hospital opening, the animals would have likely been referred to Sydney, and sometimes owners may have made the decision not to treat the animal but instead to put it down.

“Always looking for ways to improve what he does, Dr Tabrett has taken his business on a journey but at the same time, he is very inclusive of his staff. He seeks their input into how the business should be run and gives them responsibility for executing parts of the business development. He is very much a team player but also a leader, given that it is his vision that drives it all.

“So, this emergency animal hospital has truly been a long-term dream and we are proud to assist in making it a reality,” says David.

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Growing time

Once tempted to drop out of university, an Adelaide dentist has not only become a specialist in periodontics—he's also improved his business skills to purchase, expand and renovate his practices.

For Dr Steven Soukoulis, the phrase, 'The stars and moons aligned', has pretty much summed up his business strategies for nearly a decade now. He has been running one of Adelaide's leading periodontic practices since 2006 and its success is partly due to the dentist's relationship with two professional colleagues.

The first is Dr Bryon Kardachi, an Australian pioneer in the field who opened his practice on Greenhill Road, just south of the Adelaide CBD, in the late 1970s. The second is South Australian-based Jeremy Stagg, a medical finance expert who is part of BOQ Specialist.

Dr Kardachi employed Dr Soukoulis in 2001 and a few years later encouraged the 34-year-old dentist to take over the reins of the business. BOQ Specialist's Jeremy Stagg made that possible in 2006 along with an immediate move to new premises. And before too long, Dr Soukoulis purchased the premises.

"We couldn't have done it without Jeremy's assistance," Dr Soukoulis says. "He's always been there at the right time with the right advice and a good understanding of what we want to do and why. And he's a really nice guy. He knows that everyone's busy and he gets everything done quickly and efficiently."

Now aged 41, married to dental nurse Alana and raising daughters Adela, aged four, and two-year-old Eliza, Dr Soukoulis has seen Greenhill Periodontics & Implants grow into one of Adelaide's two largest

practices, with four full-time periodontists and 15 support staff.

He and his colleagues also consult in Darwin, Port Lincoln and Victor Harbor, and are about to reopen rooms in Morphett Vale in outer-metropolitan Adelaide.

It could easily have been very different, however. Dentistry was not Dr Soukoulis's first choice at university and he actually considered dropping out halfway through the course. But then, as he says, "Things got a bit more clinical, a lot more interesting and it all started to click for me.

"When I graduated, I entered into a residency in dentistry as is common in medicine," he continues. "During that time, you do every sort of stream of dentistry, except orthodontics, and I found a couple I really liked, all surgically based. Eventually, I did a Master's in periodontics, and here I am. It's amazing how the years creep up on you."

Dr Soukoulis joined Dr Kardachi's practice as one of two associates straight after finishing his Master's in early 2001. Just over three years later, talk turned to him buying into the practice, and Dr Kardachi raised the idea of him actually buying all of it.

Dr Soukoulis liked the idea but, not surprisingly, was worried about the dollars and the logistics. His accountant recommended he speak with Jeremy Stagg and they quickly formed a strong relationship.

"The three of us sat down and Jeremy said, 'This is what we need to do and this is how we can make it happen,'" Dr Soukoulis recalls. "We didn't even think about the normal banks for financing because, at the time, I was cash rich but asset poor. Banks are always looking at LVRs (loan to value ratios) of 60 to 70 per cent, and they wouldn't even give me an overdraft."

While Jeremy and Dr Soukoulis worked out how he could buy the practice, it became apparent that they also needed to move it. Business was growing, and the existing consulting rooms were getting cramped and a little outdated.

Fortunately, a wine investment company had just moved out down the road, leaving a ground floor space with great potential. It needed a lot of work, but the opportunity to stay so close to the city centre in an area that offers clients easy access and the chance to park was too good to miss.

They started gutting the place in August 2005 (with Dr Soukoulis doing more than a little manual labour), the first fit-out began in September, the second in November and the finishing touches were added just days before Christmas, leaving early January 2006 for a bit of a tidy up.

"It was a frantic time, with a lot compressed into a few months, but it was a really simple process with Jeremy there to help us through the finances and the paperwork," Dr Soukoulis says. "We just had to get the building work done."

The result is certainly impressive. The design concept is based around openness, light and drawing the external environment into the practice. This was achieved with free-floating joinery and glass, providing an unobstructed view of the Adelaide parklands.

As business grew and finances stabilised, Dr Soukoulis's landlord began sounding out his interest in buying rather than renting. His "natural financial conservatism" saw him decline, until 2014 when the time seemed right.

"I was ready, Jeremy was ready, and the space was available at a reasonable price," he explains. "The market was quite low so it was the right time."

Now things have moved a step further. "What we're doing with Jeremy is going back and reviewing whether we can refinance all of my personal loans. Given that the market's quite competitive and we work well together, we've given him the opportunity to come back and provide me with a competitive offer."

Dr Soukoulis now finds himself well positioned personally and professionally to watch both his family and his business grow.

And if you are wondering if he has any regrets about sticking with dentistry, the answer is a resounding 'no'.

"I love it and enjoy it every day," he says. "We do some pretty cool and interesting things." □

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Jeremy Stagg

BEST PRACTICE

Jeremy Stagg from BOQ Specialist jokes that Dr Soukoulis could be considered "the best of clients and the worst of clients".

"He's a fantastic guy both personally and professionally but he's hard to pin down for very long," Jeremy says. "He works hard, travels a lot to regional areas, and likes to spend his downtime with his family.

"Fortunately, because we're on the same page, I only need a short time with him to work through what he's thinking. I can then go and do the planning and then get together to start making things happen.

"The other key to our relationship has been working closely with Dr Soukoulis's

accountant on decisions, which has allowed us to consider different options.

"That was certainly the case when we were looking to finance the purchase of the offices. At first, setting things up through Dr Soukoulis's superannuation didn't seem an option, but we were able to work out something in quite different terms to what was available in the market.

"We've worked on many different things over the years—buying a business, equipment and property, working capital, as well as non-business-related things designed to set Dr Soukoulis and his family up for the future. It's been really satisfying."

Helping a doctor get back to the bush

During his final year of a medical degree, Nicholas Baillieu took a recommendation to speak with a BOQ Specialist consultant. Suddenly life as a student became just a little easier.

Nicholas Baillieu is quite happy to admit that "I don't think I'm really built for the city". Originally intending to develop a career that involved working on the land, Baillieu took his first turn away from his intended path when his farmer father convinced him to seek a different way to earn a living. He was convinced to complete an economics degree, which immediately led to a coveted spot in the Rio Tinto commercial graduate program.

Over three years, this program saw him fast-tracked through various departments inside the mining giant including marketing, sales and accounts, all of which taught him he was not cut out to sit in an office all day.

"I left with the intention of getting into medicine and since then haven't regretted that decision," the 29-year-old says.

But the past four years at university have not been easy. A trickle of spending money has come from various part-time jobs he has taken along the way and this, combined with the pressures at university, created an environment that allowed little relaxation which, in itself, is vital for academic success.

Four months from the end of his degree, around the time Baillieu was desperately craving a break from the city, the med student was told by a recent graduate about BOQ Specialist and the products they offer. He decided to get in touch and find out what BOQ Specialist could do for him.

He had previously approached other financial institutions, all of which had rejected him because he was a university student. But when he spoke with Marcus Robb at BOQ Specialist, Baillieu found a person who treated him with respect.

"Marcus didn't put my request in

the too-hard basket," he recalls. "He was really friendly and positive and said, 'Let me see what I can do'."

The result was an account with a line of credit and a credit card, which also led to a car loan, allowing Baillieu to get out of the city and clear his head.

"I've been exploring rivers in the south-west of Western Australia and have been to Wedge Island, where my great uncle has a beach shack," he says. "The ownership of a reliable car liberated me from the city.

"Being able to get away is very important for my overall health and it has helped me enormously. The funds have also been very handy for other simple things, like buying a new pair of shoes for work in a hospital. So being able to relax, to travel a little and to have a small amount of extra funds has actually proven to be very positive.

"When you sign up for a medical degree, there's no point complaining about how difficult it is because you know up front what it will be like. And the study is wonderfully interesting. But when you spend all day every day doing the same thing it can grind you down. The finance from BOQ Specialist offered relief and that had a big effect."

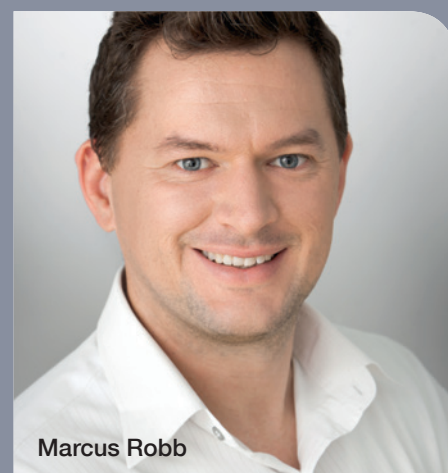
Next year Baillieu begins work as an intern at the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital in Nedlands, WA. He hopes his medical career will eventually take him away from cities as soon as possible and back out into the bush, where his father made his living on the land.

"I would like to do something that allows me to remain outside of major

cities and to work overseas," he says.

"I'd also like to work with disadvantaged people in Australia.

If I can achieve this then I'll know I have succeeded." □



Marcus Robb

BEST PRACTICE

Marcus Robb is no stranger to medical students. An external consultant with BOQ Specialist, his products are specifically shaped and customised for those at various stages of medical careers, from university students to seasoned professionals.

"We offer certain products that nobody else in the market offers," Marcus says. "These products are customised to doctors, dentists, vets and specialists. They are designed to help medical experts through their lives and their career challenges.

"We start with a graduate package, which may be an account with a credit card attached and a line of credit from \$7000 to \$15,000. It is difficult for people to work even part-time when they're doing such a degree, so we're helping them through that period.

"Then after they graduate, we're able to help them with other specific financial needs. They might go into private practice, where we can help them with their commercial financing needs. Or they could go into the hospital system where we can help them out with car loans and home loans and investment properties," says Marcus.

"We have been able to set up a credit card, a line of credit and a car loan for Nicholas. A lot of other institutions didn't even consider helping him but we were able to do so. Now he's about to graduate, I would hope that Nicholas might bank with us for many years to come."



To find out more about BOQ Specialist's tailored financial solutions for medical, dental and veterinary professionals, call us on **1300 131 141**

James Ostrobrski

BOQ Specialist, Melbourne

"You could describe me as an enthusiastic professional who cares about the world I live in. A large part of my life has centred around the performing arts, in particular dance.

"When I was six or seven years of age, a close family friend recognised I had an aptitude for the arts and enrolled me in a local dance school. It was here I excelled in ballet, which led me to the prestigious Victoria College of the Arts Secondary School (VCASS).

"VCASS was an exceptional moment in time. It was both physically and mentally challenging. Our extended school day was split in two; a half-day training in dance and music, and a half-day undertaking a standard academic program.

"Ballet demands an extreme degree of precision and discipline, builds confidence, exercises the brain and body, and it also promotes good health. I think

these outcomes have been incredibly relevant in my career development in the corporate world.

"It was always uncertain as to whether I'd pursue a career in the arts and culture sector or if I'd pursue a career in business. After sustaining an injury in my final year at the school, I pursued a keen interest in banking and finance.

"I had completed work experience with a UK-based investment firm and really enjoyed the environment, culture and the people. I had a particular interest in working directly with clients.

"Another significant part of my life is working in the philanthropic sector. The arts gave me such a strong foundation in my early life, I wanted to try and help others make this important connection.

"My grandmother and I were exceptionally close. We shared a great love of music and dance.

Following her passing three years ago, I set up a philanthropic fund to support arts and culture-based programs with a particular focus on performing arts and scholarships for young people. This led me to participate in Philanthropy Australia's New Generation of Giving program—a group of like-minded under-forties seeking to make an active contribution to the world we live in via inspired giving and leadership.

"I would encourage more Australians to think acutely about the community—what [prominent Australian investor and philanthropist] Mark Carnegie had to say in particular about social cohesion and social capital is poignant. That is, I believe that taking an active role in the world is a really important piece to building a brighter future in Australia." □





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