

# How Dental Beauty Partners is flying high

We hear from **Dev Patel** to find out why his Dental Beauty Partners corporate model is growing so successfully

## Dev Patel

Founder and CEO of  
Dental Beauty Partners



A serial entrepreneur and multi award-winning dentist, Dev Patel is not one to stand still for long.

He is founder and CEO of Dental Beauty Partners (DBP), one of the fastest growing dental groups in the UK with (at the last count) more than 35 practices under its wing.

He considers the model as a bit of an industry disruptor and the first ever 'true partnership' dental group.

Having already shaken up the oral care and dental insurance sectors with Brushlink, the health tech start-up behind a revolutionary toothbrush app, and given the profession a digital space in which to network with the hugely popular Dental Circle, he now has his sights firmly set on the dental corporate market.

## The journey

Arguably, Dev's journey to the point he is now with DBP began back in 2015 with his first practice in Swanley, Kent, that he quickly grew from two chairs to six chairs in a matter of years.

But the real embryo of the idea came to him in 2017. Keen to reduce his clinical hours to focus his business interests elsewhere but still eager to manage his practices remotely, he set himself the task of finding a profitably viable and digital solution.

And so DBP was born.

With a second practice obtained in January 2019, he then saw rapid expansion to 12 practices in January 2021 and now looks set to have 40 in the group by the end of this summer.

He's hoping to reach the milestone of 100 by the end of 2024.

But why enter an already crowded and competitive market where more established corporates remain ever hungry for those all-important acquisitions?

Dev is undeterred.

'The corporate model is "dusty" to say the least, and has a poor reputation.

'We needed to change the model and improve the quality.

'We knew the current corporate model was broken, so we decided to disrupt the market with what has become one of the fastest-growing and most innovative models seen in the UK.

'We have a different approach to the large corporates inasmuch as we are far more interested in the smaller practices that require updating with an investment of cash and TLC than the bigger, more profitable businesses.

'Our model is also a partnership model so we initially acquire 51% equity, leaving partners to focus on clinical care while we take care of the rest.'

## Finding the staff

Most of the time, DBP will grow any practices it acquires and, in the majority of cases, bring in new partners to run the clinics.

Dev's ability to source like-minded practitioners is impressive.

But it is his innate ability to pair them with the right practice that is key, ever mindful of the need to maintain a keen focus on DBP's ethos in encouraging



the personal and professional development of the whole team.

Having bought and invested in 35-plus existing dental practices, he has his pick of young ambitious clinicians eager to run them.

Within each practice, he implements quality measures to deliver high standards, while investing in the digital patient journey.

And this new style of structuring means its dentists feel trusted, supported and guided to grow their own dental practice.

## We offer a great training ground for those who want to take that next step towards becoming a practice principal

Dev says: 'When we choose partners, we find exactly the right clinicians – often young entrepreneurial dentists – who are eager to grow and are looking to move into practice ownership but haven't the finance or know-how as yet.

'With us, there is less risk, making the business more financially viable.

'It helps them to have our experts guide them (there is a lot of teaching and mentorship) and our head office of 35 staff offer recruitment, finance and training support, leaving the dentists to do what they know and love – manage a clinical team with clinical freedom.'

## Reaching full potential

Dev is fully aware that rapid expansion can risk the authenticity of a carefully cultivated ethos and he is careful to adapt so as not to ruin the model.

'We are growing so fast but we are always open to change.

'Our systems are digital and easy to manage, which makes it easier to offer expertise to ensure we remain a customer-focused brand.'



The DBP brand has been carefully cultivated to draw in not just committed, long-term patients but future partners as well.

High quality design and surgery equipment are key and, generally, once a practice is purchased, there is a programme of expansion and investment.

This initial commitment is everything and a vital component of DBP's growth, in ensuring each practice reaches its full potential and quickly.

Dev explains: 'We will always add more chair space and can double the turnover of an existing practice once it comes into our fold.

'With 200-300 dental chairs across the group, our "go to" choice is the Belmont Clesta – it's a robust, extremely reliable workhorse and looks great as well.

'We also ensure our equipment is state-of-the-art with new scanners, X-ray equipment and so on and will fit out a surgery from scratch so that we attract the right talent and patient base.'

There is also a strong investment of people, which prevents high staff turnover.

'The whole point of nurturing the culture of shared goals and having an open-door policy is to support this,' Dev says.

## Finding the right partners

Ideally, partners and visions need to be fully aligned and this is the blueprint for all DBP's practices.

'Creating a great team culture, where everyone feels respected, supported and valued, is our primary focus.

'We offer a great training ground for those who want to take that next step towards becoming a practice principal.'

Seemingly then, Dev has discovered the ultimate formula for success with this partnership model.

But, more importantly perhaps, he is an inspiration for those young entrepreneurial dentists who follow and are eager to play their part in this revolution. **D**

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