

# Creating a legacy

A look at one practice owners incredible journey against the odds.

Mihir Shah has already defied the odds. Born with a life-threatening congenital heart condition, he was given just 48 hours to live. Then, under the care of Great Ormond Street Hospital until he was 18 he had open heart surgery at the age of two and again just before his A-levels. But his life is about more than simply surviving his critical congenital condition.

As the CEO of Kreate Dental, Mihir has just acquired his second practice, Kreate Dental Rugby.

After graduating from Leeds in 2013, he refurbished and opened Kreate in the village of Sutton at Hone, Dartford, in 2018. It is a business built on four solid principles – clinical excellence, state-of-the-art technology, a friendly and compassionate approach to care and a commitment to deliver the care he believes patients deserve. The purchase of the second practice is, Mihir says, “A huge step for us as a team and the company.”

Gifted a second opportunity at life, Mihir was somewhat of a dentistry ‘fan boy’ from the get-go, volunteering at a practice while at school with his eyes firmly set on his future career.

His illness never limited his boundaries or dictated his life choices – he says he has always had a positive outlook. And he continues to smash any pre-conceptions of what living with a lifelong health condition looks like.

It is possibly thanks to this determination to overcome health setbacks that Kreate Dental has come such a long way in a relatively short space of time.

The Dartford practice began with a small team and just two surgeries. At the time, Mihir was in his late 20s and looking for something relatively affordable and close to the family home.

He explains, “I never had a vision of growing Kreate to what it is today. All I wanted was to provide quality dentistry to as many people as possible.”



Mihir Shah is the CEO of Kreate Dental.

Mihir took over a two-surgery run-of-the-mill practice, and during lockdown initiated renovations to double its capacity.

Mihir adds, “Nobody accounts for a pandemic in their business plan, but it gave us time to reset and helped grow Kreate.”

Initially, he opened with extended hours, providing patients with more flexibility but at a financial loss to the business, so keen was he to make a great impression. As the practice’s reputation grew, the quality of the brand improved. Increasing capacity was not something that could be achieved overnight. It required strong emotional support. Unsurprisingly, this came from Mihir’s parents who have been there for him throughout his journey.

He explains, “I come from a non-dental family. My parents are my biggest champions and have always had my back. More recently, the loving support of my wife – who truly

understands the sacrifices that need to be made – has given me the strength and confidence to succeed.”

The Dartford team of 20 now enjoy four state-of-the-art surgeries, including a studio for facial aesthetic treatments. With nothing left to chance, the eye for detail is commendable. And this applies to his relationship with the team, too.

Mihir says, “I wanted to create a brand and do the type of dentistry I truly believed in and that would be sustainable and rewarding – not just in the clinic but for everyone in the team. My idea was to change the culture of dentistry in how people felt about coming to work. It is now satisfying looking at the journey so far and seeing the development of every team member.”

And the proof is there – in his encouragement of feedback, his funding of staff training and how readily he welcomes ambition and nurtures open communication. It



is a business ethos that is paying dividends. He adds, "Sometimes, practice owners fail to communicate well with the team, which is a huge mistake because they are there to support the business. I am proud to say that since I took over the practice, we have not lost one staff member."

Mihir is always looking at short-term and long-term trends in dentistry and this helps to deliver on new expectations. "The key is to see where the demand is and potentially meet it," he says. "We want to change so we potentially have everything under one roof with a multidisciplinary team."

This attention to detail is evident in the practice design, too. Unique and modern, each treatment room features a muted grey colour scheme complemented by natural wood-effect flooring. They have TV screens flush to the ceiling and a cutting-edge Sonos wireless sound system with unique scents permeating the practice. A Belmont Voyager chair, fitted by SPS Dental, takes centre stage in each room. In one of the suites, the Belmont chair adds a splash of lime green to the room. Mihir comments,

"The simplicity of the chairs is second to none. I love that they are so reliable as a company, have the greatest inventory of parts, and technicians are always there to support us. SPS Dental provided a stellar service in fitting the surgeries, and I am ecstatic my vision has come to life."

With Kreate Dental 2 now open, he is fulfilling a need in Rugby as well. "I wanted to broaden the brand. Year three into developing the company and I saw that a second site potentially had legs. We are now in a position to help more people and deliver a high standard of care to more patients."

Kreate 2 is also a mixed practice that offers NHS specialised orthodontic services as well as providing routine NHS care and private dentistry. "The NHS system is struggling and this impacts sectors of the public who have no other options available. Without that infrastructure and support, who will look after them? Our dental training was subsidised by the public so we must try to support the patients who need us."

Looking at his achievements so far, it feels as if Mihir is on a fast-moving

trajectory to successful business ownership. So, does the speed of his career development stem from the health challenges he had early on in life?

He explains, "I'd already had a lot of knock-backs at a tender age, but life has to progress. If we stay stagnant, our business suffers because we are not developing our skillset. I'm all about positivity and it is the fibre of what I do now. Potentially every problem can be resolved."