



The pitfalls to avoid before
starting a medical fit-out

Choosing the right site



Throughout the medical design fit-out, medical professionals need to be wary of hiccups that can prevent them from completing their design project. However, many forget that some of the most common and costly pitfalls can occur before a single brick has been laid.

Budget aside, without proper planning and forethought practitioners may find themselves up a creek without a paddle: The perfect site quickly turning into quagmire that is both costly and restrictive to growth.

Monica Benavides, managing director of Space for Health, has outlined several common pitfalls to help guide practitioners in avoiding them in the lead-up to designing a medical fit-out.



Choosing the right site

The success or failure of a medical fit-out is often determined long before construction begins, says Monica Benavides. There are a number of significant hurdles that practitioners need to be aware of, before they begin the construction process, as ignoring them can be costly.

Three of the most significant issues that can arise, Monica explains, include:

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1. Purchasing in the wrong zone

“The biggest pitfall is the site itself, namely committing to a site that doesn’t comply with regulations,” says Monica.

Buying a home with the intent to transform it into a medical practise without first checking that the zoning in the area can also be changed from residential to medical can, in the worst case scenario, leave a practitioner with an expensive asset they cannot use.



' If the building does not have enough basic services, upgrades will have to be done out of pocket '

2. Leasing a substandard property

When practitioners do not buy, leasing property is the next option. However, signing a five-year lease on a substandard property can be just as damaging if the property isn't already primed for use.

"If the building does not have enough basic services, upgrades will have to be done out of pocket, on the landlord's behalf in order to reach compliance," says Monica.

This money spent upgrading the facilities in a leasehold building ultimately ends up as an asset for the landlord. At the end of the day, if the lease is not renewed, practitioners have no choice but to walk away from the time and money they have invested in the property.



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3. Not understanding compliance and regulations of the local council

The third common pitfall, especially when relocating a practice or setting up and new one in a different council or territory, is assuming compliance regulations carry over in the same way.

“Compliance regulations vary from council to council, state to state,” says Monica. “Depending on the practice set up medical fitouts need to comply with the building construction code of Australia.” This can range from complying with the number of allocated car parks per practitioners, to the amount of square feet required for a particular site.

When setting up in a new council or territory, practitioners need to comprehensively understand the regulations prior to committing to a specific project to avoid shuffling up the design of a project in order to meet the new regulations.



Experience and planning is key

Thankfully, medical practitioners don't have to know the ins and outs of a medical fitout or healthcare construction project. Getting in touch with the right experts early on in the planning phase can help ensure that there'll be no nasty surprises waiting halfway through construction, blowing the original budget out entirely.

Space for Health can help medical practitioners through any stage of the design, construction and post-construction process.

To find out more, reach out to us today.



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