

6MINUTES NEWS

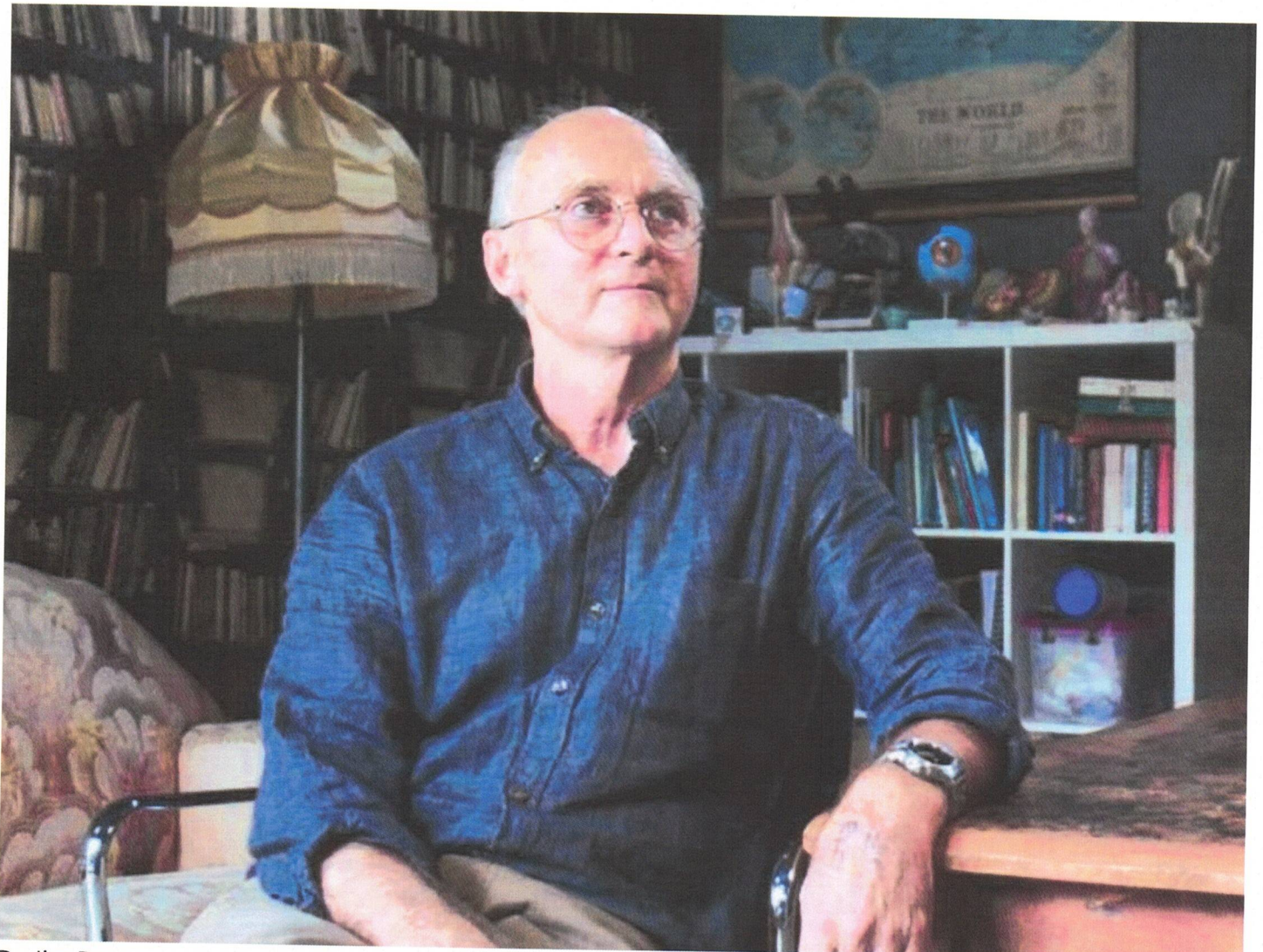
Vintage cabinets and Italian doors - take a look at the RACGP's Practice of the Year

Dr Jim Berryman's clinic in Wynyard, Tasmania, is a visual delight where patients can enjoy a hot chocolate by a roaring fire

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By Heather Saxena |

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A deer head mounted on the wall, friendly cats and a waiting room that looks like it was transported from an English country cottage — welcome to this year's RACGP Practice of the Year.



Dr. Jim Berryman in the teaching room of his clinic.

The eclectic Saunders Street Clinic, located in Wynyard, on Tasmania's northwest coast, is the masterpiece of GP Dr Jim Berryman and his wife Rebecca.

They were determined to make the practice as "minimally clinical" and "physically appealing" as possible when they remodelled new premises in 2013.

The consultation rooms contain all the necessities of a modern practice and are as clean as a whistle.



PROMOTED

Which T2D once-weekly injectable has a CV indication?

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But the examination beds, sinks and trolleys can't compete with features such as a pressed metal wall, a vintage cabinet and the grey VJ board ceiling that contrasts with vintage pendant lights in green.

Other common general practice items are cleverly hidden, such as a soap dispenser behind a wooden box with a phrenology poster on the front.

"Rebecca had the fun part of putting it all together," Dr Berryman tells *6minutes*.

"[The remodel] was a good chance to get up a practice that doctors and nurses would like to work in.

"I love walking into this place. My wife and I have put our heart and soul into it."

The clinic was nominated as Practice of the Year by local mayor Robbie Walsh, who was blown away by how much the practice means to the local community.

"We have a coffee and hot chocolate machine and have a fire going in the waiting and staff rooms in winter," Dr Berryman said.

"Pre-coronavirus we encouraged people to come along and have a chat with friends they hadn't seen in a long time. It's a quite a catch-up place for a lot of the older people."



A consult room at Saunders Street Clinic.

Dr Berryman started his practice in 2009 with a nurse and about 300 patients and quickly outgrew his rented premises. The current building now houses 10 doctors, two nurses and a patient base of about 5000.

Inspiration for the décor came from the Berrymans' travels around Australia and overseas. Many of the pieces were sourced and imported locally, including doors from France and Italy, beams from a demolished wharf and the pendant lights, which came from a pulp mill.

“We tried to incorporate a lot of local history,” Dr Berryman said.

The practice adopted a cat, Martha Stewart, after she was dumped on a neighbour's balcony. She subsequently brought home a new friend; a little black cat known as BC. Patients love the felines, who nevertheless remain at a respectful and non-allergy-triggering distance.

Patients also bring their companion animals, including a VID (very important dog) named Tyson.

Many of the doctors working in the practice first came as rural clinical students, returning as GP registrars and finally as fully qualified GPs.

In fact, Dr Berryman's favourite room is the teaching room, which stands out with 'books in a bookshelf' wallpaper graphic.



A staghead at reception.

“It’s a great place for doctors to train and work,” he said.

“We’re family-friendly, so often staff members who have young children will bring them here.

“We have more people wanting to work here than we have room for.”



More information: Saunders Street Clinic