



What's in a name: Dentist Dr Briana Fang enjoys working with her hands

Picture: John Fotiadis

Open wide to fill a hole in oral care

WHAT'S in a name? As far as last names go this dentist was born for oral hygiene. Dr Briana Fang says it wasn't until dental school the teasing began, and then it didn't matter.

"I know, fang, teeth, it's the perfect surname for a dentist," she says.

"I get comments every day, though it's usually the raise of an eyebrow rather than a direct comment."

For most of her school life Fang planned on becoming either a doctor or a teacher. But when she missed out on being accepted into medicine she reassessed her options.

"I like to do things with my hands, I got accepted into dentistry and thought it would suit me," Fang says.

"I got a late acceptance into medicine at UNSW in the end but decided I still wanted to study dentistry."

At the time the Bachelor of Dentistry at Sydney University was five years.

On completing the degree, Fang spent her first year working as a dental officer at Westmead Dental Hospital.

"I then went to a private practice in Burwood for three years," she says.

"I started getting a bit bored so I went to work in the UK, their system is similar, however their health system doesn't cover as many procedures as ours."

With the travelling bug out of her system, Fang returned to Sydney to take up a position with Dr Steven Tracy & Associates.

"I've been here five years. I feel very lucky to work here, Steve is a great boss, he loves to teach, I have learned a lot from him," she says.

"I recently cut back to two days a week and I opened my own practice in Northmead."

trades & services

Dr Briana Fang

How did you get your job: I am a friend with one of the nurses from a previous job, she put me in contact with Dr Tracy.

Upside: The best part of my job is watching the self esteem of a patient improve after I have fixed their teeth.

Downside: It can be stressful when patients don't want to hear what you have to tell them.

Fang and her brother have set up Twinkles, a medical and dental centre.

"We're both interested in children and family so we came up with the name Twinkles," she says.

On an average day Fang does check-ups, fillings, root canal, dentures, crowns, teeth whitening and sometimes works on braces.

"My most bizarre request would have to be a lady who came in saying, 'Please don't make me fix my crooked top teeth. My boyfriend likes them that way'," she says.

"And my worst patient was an old lady who came in with such bad gum disease I could smell it as soon as she walked in the room."

Jenny Ringland