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MELBOURNE FUNCTIONAL MEDICINE

BUSINESS WEBINAR

Building a Sustainable Practice Model –

Retention Strategies, Consult Conversations, and Practice Models That Work

Presented by:
Jabe Brown, Functional Medicine Practitioner and Business Strategist

Presenter | Jabe Brown

Founder & Director of multi award-winning Melbourne Functional Medicine

MELBOURNE FUNCTIONAL MEDICINE

ATMS Natural Medicine AWARDS 2024 — WINNER Clinic OF THE YEAR

- Grew MFM from a solo practice to one of Australia's leading natural health clinics, with a team of 15 and revenue of $2M.
- Passionate about growth, innovation, and building great clinic culture.
- Loves geeking out on biohacking, optimisation… and the occasional board game.

Host | Chantal Oxley

Chantal Oxley is a qualified Naturopath and Reiki Practitioner who provides health education services for Designs for Health practitioners. She also maintains her own natural health practice, where she supports women through a blend of naturopathy and energetic healing.

Chantal has a special interest in:

- Nervous system regulation and embodied wellbeing
- Women's health, fertility, and emotionally challenging life transitions
- Energetic healing and removing blockages that keep clients feeling stuck

Chantal will moderate the Q&A discussion for this webinar and engage our live Designs for Health Practitioner community to bring insights and practical takeaways for all.

What we're covering today

1 Understand the Foundations of a Sustainable Practice Model

- Define what "sustainability" means in a modern health care practice context
- Identify the critical link between clinical outcomes, client retention, and financial viability

2 Apply Ethical Client Retention Strategies

- Understand why retention is essential in the current economic climate
- Identify key stages in a client retention funnel from initial consult to long-term care
- Implement practical, ethical strategies to maintain engagement without pressure or discounting

3 Navigate Consult Conversations with Confidence

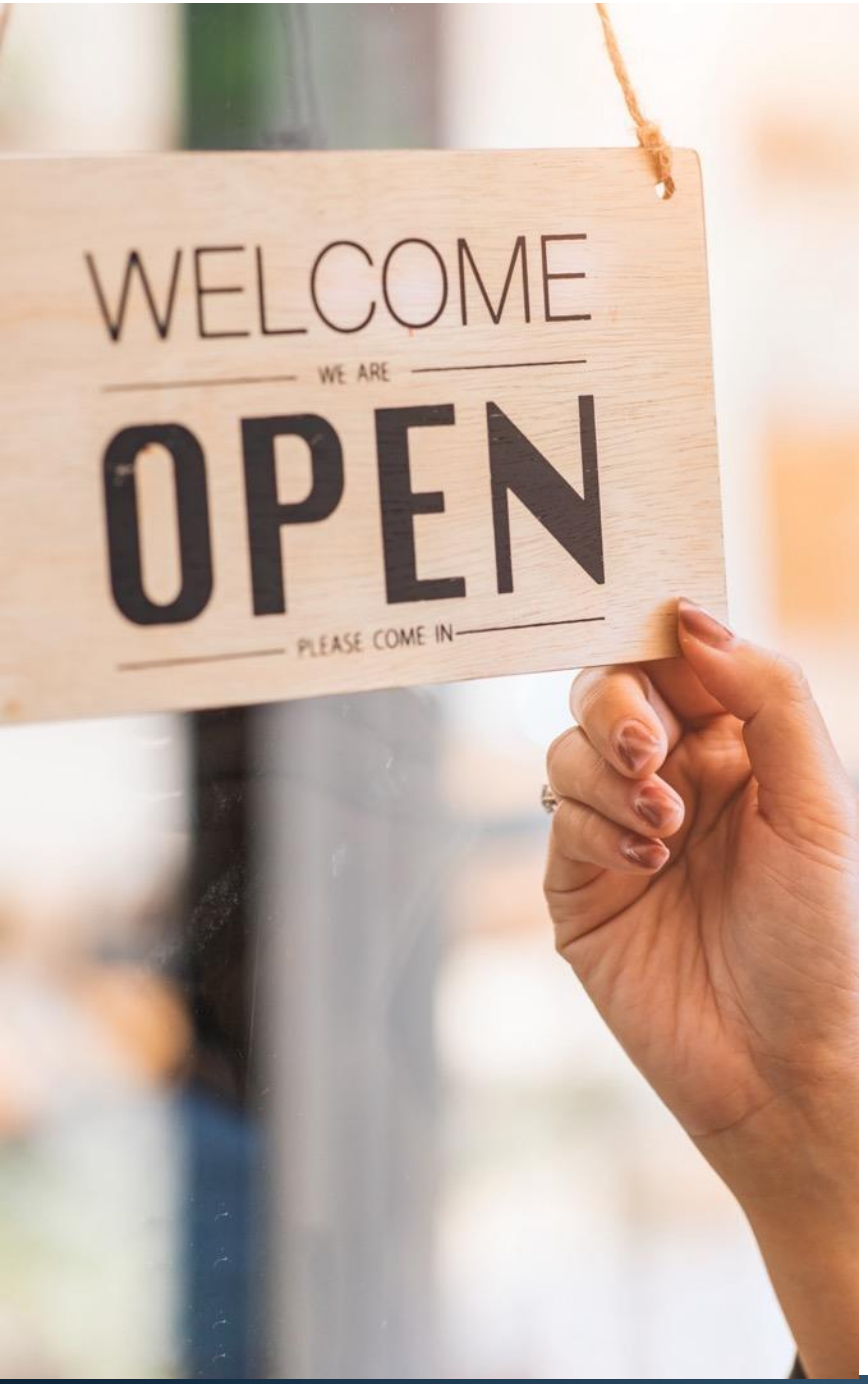
- Develop clear and confident language to discuss:
  Treatment plans | Visit frequency | Ongoing care recommendations
- Address cost concerns compassionately while reinforcing value and outcomes
- Reduce discomfort around financial discussions while maintaining professionalism

4 Evaluate Practice Models: Packages vs 1:1 Consultations, In Person vs Online / Telehealth

- Understand the advantages and challenges of:
  Package-based care | Pay-per-visit / 1:1 consultation models
  In Person consultations | Online / Telehealth
- Learn from real-world experience transitioning between models
- Identify when offering more than one model may support practitioner and patient needs

What is practice sustainability?

Profitability → No profit = Loss (unsustainable)



Like it or not, you're in business!

Become business curious

Apply best practices

The economics of retention

5-25x cost of customer acquisition over retention

5% increased retention → 25% boost to profitability

Retention isn’t a marketing metric - it is a compliance metric

The modern clinical squeeze

Cost of living pressures

Performative competition

AI

The answer = trust + confidence

Retention from the get-go

1

Before initial

Set tone.

2

During initial

Set expectations.

3

Post appointment

Remove friction (products, bookings, payments, questions, notes, testing).

Between appointments

Stay connected (check-ins, education. CRM?).

Pre-framing the patient journey

Honeymoon phase

Reality bites during implementation - expected and normal

Re-evaluation and pivots - inevitable ‘failures’ are valuable data

Maintenance - preventative, not reactive

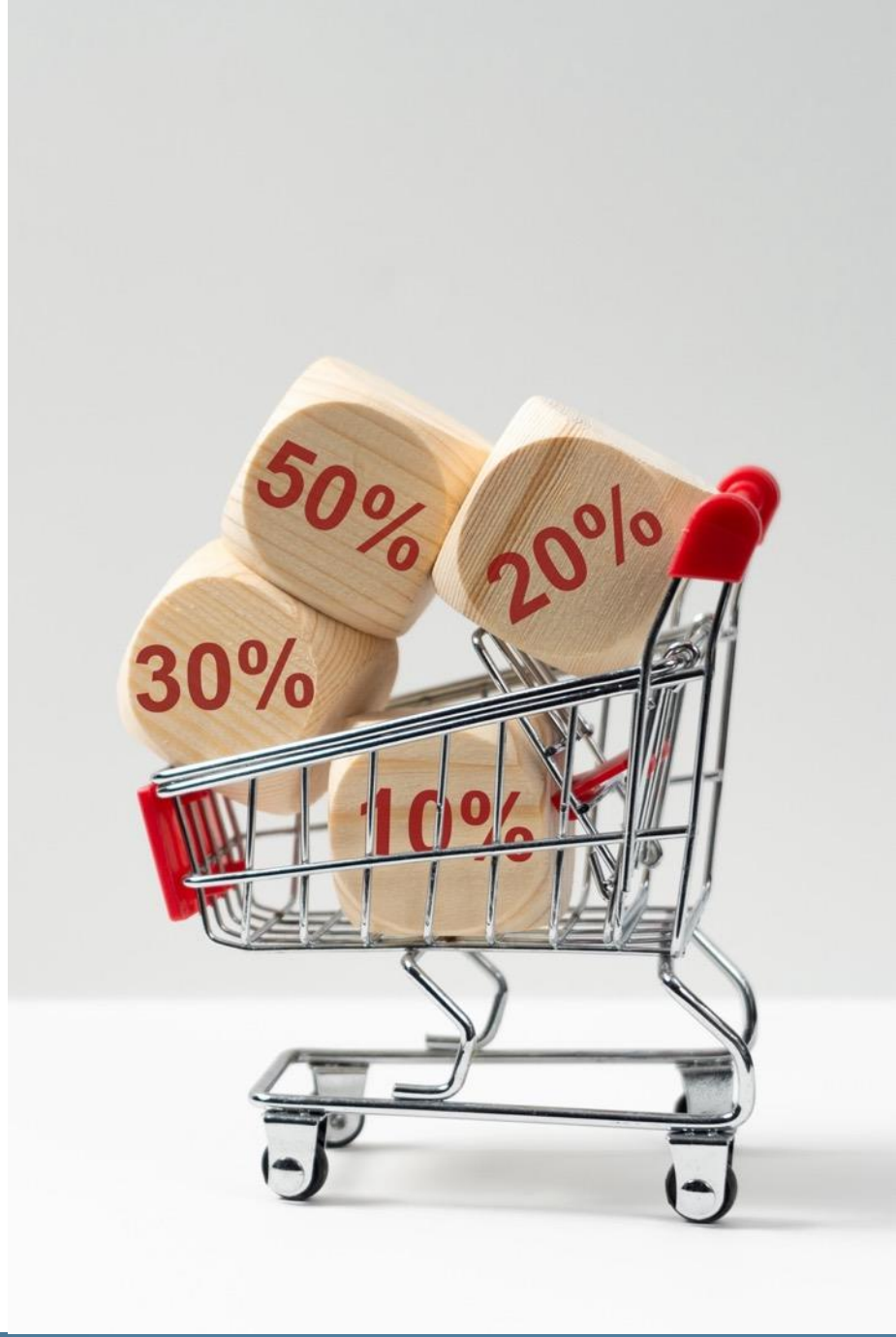
Money stuff

Build wallet trust –

Proactively demonstrate care for their money. Don’t pressure.

Discounting is a trap.

Exceed expectations instead.



Separating money from medicine

Booking and payment workflows, not awkward conversations.

Separation by space in clinic.

Empathic compassion to cost → don’t try to convince.

Give options, explanations, alternatives. They choose.

Practice models

Model structure	Core advantages	Primary challenges
Pay-As-You-Go (1:1)	• Low entry friction • Highly flexible	• 'No show' costs • Tendency to reactive care
Package / Bundled Care	• Sell once • Improved compliance • Predictable outcomes	• Harder to get first commit • New patient addiction
Subscriptions	• Predictable recurring revenue = stable practice economics	• Difficult to generalise value • Constant churn

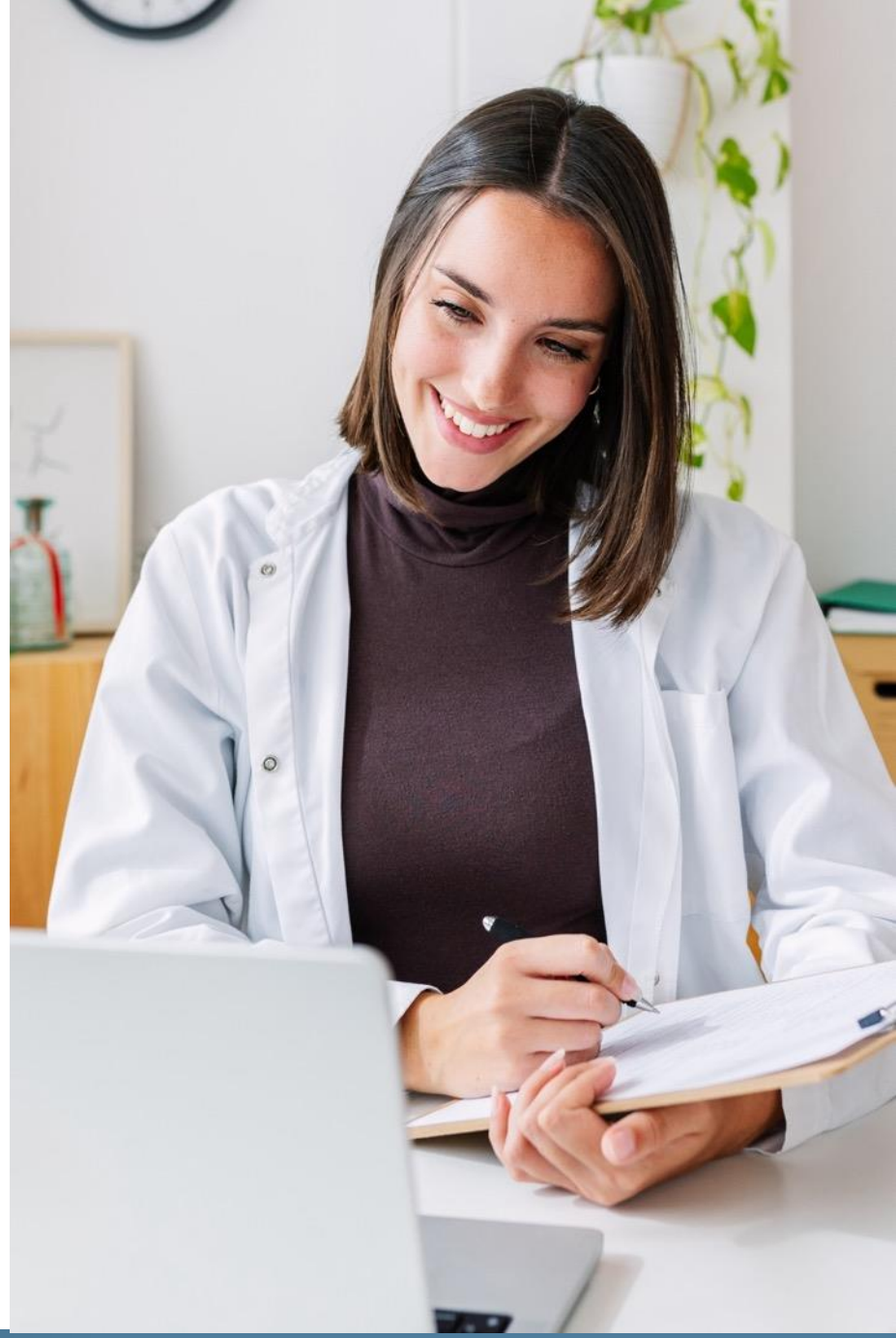
Telehealth vs in-person

In-person

- Geolocally constrained: good (less competition) and bad (smaller market).
- Shows legitimacy.
- Physical assessments.

Telehealth

- Convenience.
- The world is your market.



As with evolution

Adapt

The answers for next will be different to now

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