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'I'd be terrified': Why new GPs fear practice ownership



[Paddy Wood \(/author/paddy-wood\)](#) 27 January 2016



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NEW GPs are terrified of the prospect of one day owning their own practice, put off by concerns about money, business skills, and administration.

Dr Elizabeth Sturgiss, a GP and researcher at ANU, says she was surprised by the level of fear expressed by 19 registrars and recent fellows interviewed for her study.

Asked to think about the prospect of practice ownership, one registrar said: “That’s the furthest thing from my mind. I’d be absolutely terrified to do it.”

Another responded: “I’m actually scared of owning a practice.”

Financial concerns were most common, Dr Sturgiss and her co-authors [report in Australian Health Review](http://www.publish.csiro.au/paper/AH15153.htm) (<http://www.publish.csiro.au/paper/AH15153.htm>).

Several were nervous about business competition from corporates, and many were concerned about balancing administration with clinical practice.

Dr Sturgiss says many new GPs look to their supervisors for guidance, suggesting that teachers should include discussions about ownership as part of training.

“The common perception is that registrars are not interested in this topic, but our work disputes this,” she says.

“Registrars are interested in learning about practice ownership. They want to gain leadership skills during their training.

“Mentorship with experienced doctor-owners may be a way forward to support registrars who are interested in practice ownership and leadership skills.”

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Digital Editor

Paddy joined Medical Observer in 2015 from the Australian Associated Press, where he ran the agency's technology coverage before joining the Sydney bureau to report on crime, politics and courts. His stories have appeared in *The Guardian*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Korea Herald*, *The Australian*, *The Daily Telegraph*, and others.

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