

Terrence Keaney, MD, FAAD

Making the leap to private practice in 2017



Terrence Keaney, MD, FAAD, an assistant clinical professor of dermatology at George Washington University in Washington, DC, is living his dream. The dermatologist just cut the ribbon for his own private practice, SkinDC, near Arlington, VA after working for more than a year to make his vision a reality. Dr. Keaney's journey to private

practice serves as the basis of *Ground Up!*, a new reality TV show on DermTube.com's sister channel ModernAesthetics.tv that aims to give viewers a warts-and-all look at what it takes to go it alone in 2017.

Why did you decide to go out on your own?

Dr. Keaney: There were many reasons that I decided to open my own practice after five years as part of a group practice. One of the main reasons was control. I wanted the control to create my ideal work environment. My goal with SkinDC was to create a comprehensive and unique practice where we perform cosmetic and medical dermatology while maintaining an academic focus with clinical research and mentoring of medical students and residents. I had a practice vision where we could provide the full complement of dermatology services while emphasizing customer service and patient satisfaction. When you have a specific practice model in mind, it makes sense to create it yourself.

What surprised you the most about the process?

Dr. Keaney: I knew it would take a while, but I didn't anticipate it taking 14 months. I thought that I had realistic expectations, yet there were always delays. For example, we found the office space right away, but it took eight months to finalize the lease.

While people told me it would take longer than I thought to open a practice, I wish I believed them. There were delays and hiccups along the way, but I could not be happier with how it all turned out.

What do you wish you knew or did differently?

Dr. Keaney: You need to rely on others. There are people who you will need to guide you through the process. It's important to identify these people early whether it is a lawyer, an accountant or a realtor, so they are lined up and ready to go when you need their help. There were a couple

of decisions that required consulting with our accountant earlier than we anticipated, and this wouldn't have been possible if we didn't have someone on board.

What types of marketing are you doing to support and promote SkinDC?

Dr. Keaney: We will be rolling the marketing out in stages and are still in the early start-up phase. We aren't doing paid marketing yet. For now, we want to make sure we are easy to find. This involves optimizing our Internet presence and website through search engine optimization services, and making sure all directories point back to our new practice. We are also actively reaching out to local referral doctors including internists and pediatricians so they know we are out there and are educated about what services we provide. In the future, we will likely start investing in more social media advertising and other paid opportunities.

Tell us about *Ground Up*, your new reality series on MATV.

Dr. Keaney: This show is a resource that would have been helpful when I started. I hope that those who start the process after me can learn from my successes and failures. Many physicians today are coming out of residency and don't think it's feasible to start their own practice so they join big groups, but solo practice is still possible and can be a successful, satisfying business model." ■

DON'T MISS AN EPISODE OF GROUND UP WITH TERRENCE KEANEY, MD

Now playing on MATV:
modernaesthetics.com/series/ground-up/

