GP Locum Program – General Practitioner Overview

2015-2016
As at 1 December 2015

Northern Territory PHN (NT PHN) provides a free Locum Matching and Placement Service for all permanent General Practitioners working across the Northern Territory. The GP locum program operates to support the needs of remote, rural and urban communities to access Primary Health Medical Services; and to provide retention support to existing General Practitioners as they take approved leave. In addition, GP locum placements can also be provided where there is a current General Practitioner vacancy (subject to certain conditions).

NT PHN can assist with GP locum placements at Aboriginal Medical Services (AMS), private General Practices and Northern Territory Government Services in remote communities and towns throughout the Northern Territory. All GP locums are provided with orientation support including Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training and locally relevant medical resources. Placements are generally for a minimum of two weeks, however shorter periods may be negotiated.

What does Northern Territory PHN’s GP locum program provide?
- maintains a register of current GP locums
- proactively advertises GP locum vacancies
- undertakes screening and credentialing of all GP locums, and monitors these prior to a GP locum placement
- matches a registered GP locum to a vacancy to ensure a good job fit for the role
- coordinates travel arrangements for the GP locum
- provides administration support on behalf of the Health Service (verification of credentials, requesting provider numbers, land permit)
- pays the GP on receipt of a tax invoice and Health Service approved timesheet (plus GST if registered)
- invoices Health Service on a monthly basis.

Register as a GP locum with Northern Territory PHN
Working as a GP locum in the Northern Territory is varied, interesting and challenging. The rewards are great and there are opportunities to really make a difference. General Practitioners seeking short term work in the Northern Territory, are invited to register with the Northern Territory PHN (placements are usually a minimum of two weeks). If you have not worked as a General Practitioner in the Northern Territory before, some orientation supports may be provided including aboriginal cultural awareness training and locally relevant medical resources.
Expand your horizons, and explore other General Practitioners experiences working in rural and remote Northern Territory.

**Screening of GP locums**

All General Practitioners registering as a GP locum undergo a recruitment and screening process through Northern Territory PHN. This process endeavours to ensure they are prepared for Locum Placements in a variety of regional and remote settings. This includes an interview with an NT PHN engaged Clinical Advisor.

The NT PHN requires that new GP locums have the following:

- fellowship of the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (FACRRM) or Fellowship of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (FRACGP)
- non restricted registration by the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency (AHPRA) with a General Practice Specialisation
- evidence of Continuing Professional Development
- current Medicare Prescriber Number
- current Medical Indemnity Insurance
- up to date Curriculum Vitae (CV) and two professional referees from different organisations
- National Criminal History Check
- Ochre Card (NT Working with Children Clearance Notice) or ability to obtain one
- own Australian Business Number (ABN) or ability to obtain one
- copy of relevant proof of right to work in Australia document
- copy of Australian Driver’s License (should driving be required at a placement).

It is also highly desirable that new GP locums have:

- a minimum of three years general practice experience
- previous experience with Aboriginal Health
- skills in emergency medicine, trauma and life support
- procedural skills for example obstetrics, anesthetics
- Australian Driver’s License
- four wheel driving skills (for regional/remote areas).

**Codes of Conduct**

In signing the terms of the Contract for the Provision of Services, the GP accepts to carry out their duties in accordance with the Medical Board of Australia’s “Good Medical Practice: a Code of Conduct for Doctors in Australia” and the Northern Territory PHN GP locum Code of Conduct.
How do I arrange to do a GP locum placement?

Northern Territory PHN (NT PHN) maintains a register of General Practitioners willing to provide GP locum services through urban, rural and remote Health Services / Clinics. General Practitioners interested in undertaking GP locum placements in the Northern Territory, may be contacted by NT PHN to seek their interest in a placement; or the GP locum may contact the NT PHN to express their interest in being considered for a GP locum placement advertised on Northern Territory PHN’s website.

To be considered for a GP locum placement, the GP locum must be registered with NT PHN’s GP locum program. To do this, a General Practitioner must have completed the above registration process.

In addition, the GP locum must be 'job ready' by ensuring that all registrations and credentials are valid for the duration of the placement period. This is the responsibility of each GP locum and expiry of any requirement will result in NT PHN not making a placement recommendation.

If a GP locum is interested in being considered for a particular placement and they are registered, NT PHN will submit the GP locums’ Curriculum Vitae to the relevant Health Service for consideration. For this reason GP locums are requested to maintain a current resume on file with NT PHN.

If a Health Service wishes to engage the GP locum for the placement, they will notify the Locum Coordinator; who will coordinate all of the necessary arrangements.

How does a GP locum placement work?

Once the terms and conditions of the placement are agreed, the GP locum enters into a Contract for the Provision of Services with NT PHN for the placement; whilst the Health Service sign a Northern Territory PHN Locum Service Agreement for the corresponding placement. These documents outline the agreed conditions, and roles and responsibilities of each of the parties during the placement.

In general, the Health Service should provide the following to the GP locum; however this must be confirmed for each individual placement:

- suitable accommodation for the duration of the placement
- air travel (bookings generally arranged by the NT PHN). Fares are economy class. Fare upgrades, requested stopovers and excess baggage are to be paid by the GP locum
- land transport, bus/coach, hire car if required, or fuel for self-drive to the placement location
- public holidays where the GP locum is required to work (whether it be rostered or on-call) are to be paid by the Health Service
- payment for relevant land permits (if required).
The following may be provided, however must be agree with the Health Service for each GP locum placement:

- public holidays (and/or Sorry Days) where the GP locum is not required to work, may be paid for by the clinic
- access to a vehicle to use during the placement dates (inside / outside of work hours)
- in transit accommodation, where this is necessary due to the route or schedule
- airport taxi fares/fuel/parking at the GP locums originating airport
- some clinics may reimburse other GP locum expenses, and it is advisable that locums keep all receipts.

*The specific Contract for the Provision of Services for each placement will outline exactly what has been agreed to be provided and the details of such. Ensure the contract is checked thoroughly prior to signing.*

**GP locum Responsibilities:**

- liaise with the Northern Territory PHN Locum Coordinator for placement details, including requirements for travel
- be available to participate in Orientation Activities required and organised by the Health Service
- comply with the Medical Board of Australia’s “Good Medical Practice: A Code of Conduct for Doctors in Australia” ([www.medicalboard.gov.au](http://www.medicalboard.gov.au)) and the Northern Territory PHN GP locum Code of Conduct (as referenced in the Contract for the Provision of Services)
- submit all required documentation in a timely manner
- submit tax invoices to the NT PHN together with timesheets approved and signed by the Health Service. In order to be paid in the Weekly Payment Cycle, the Contractor must submit completed invoices with signed timesheets by 9am Wednesdays for days worked. Invoices received after this time, will be processed the following week
- leave any provided accommodation and vehicles in good condition
- submit completed Locum Evaluation on Clinic Form to NT PHN at the end of a placement.

**Northern Territory PHN Responsibilities:**

- coordinate all logistics associated with the GP locum placement, including verification of credentials, requesting provider numbers
- arrange air and land travel (economy class fares)
- arrange in transit accommodation, where this is necessary due to the route or available schedule
- provide pre placement, placement and post placement support to both the GP locums and Health Services.
### Incentives

In some circumstances, incentives are provided to GP locums to assist with the additional costs associated with completing a GP locum placement. Northern Territory PHN will continue to support these Health Services through the provision of the full recruitment and placement service outlined previously. For the 2015 to 2016 Financial Year, NT PHN will provide the following subsidies to GP locums who completed GP locum placements with both Aboriginal Medical Services and Private Health Clinics located within Remote Areas 4 and 5; as well as Aboriginal Medical Services in Remote Area 3.

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<tr>
<th>Leave Cover Incentives</th>
<th>Vacancy Cover Incentives</th>
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<td><strong>Locum Placement Bonus</strong> financial payment to GP locum for the completion of a continuous 4 week placement. The Contract for the Provision of Services must be a minimum of 20 working days. Flat rate one off payment.</td>
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<td><strong>Travel Allowance</strong> partial subsidy for any GP locum required to fly from residence, access overnight accommodation prior to further travel to Health Services. If Travel Allowance is covered by the Health Service, then the GP locum is not eligible for NT PHN’s Travel Allowance. Flat rate one off payment.</td>
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<td><strong>Public Holiday Payment (non-worked)</strong></td>
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<td>If a Public Holiday falls within the GP locum placement period, and is not worked, a partial subsidy will be paid. For those Health Services that currently pay GP locums for Public Holidays not worked, the reimbursement will be made directly to the Health Service and not the GP locum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>If the GP locum is eligible for the Locum Placement Bonus, then this allowance does not apply. Flat rate one off payment. $400.00</td>
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If you require more information about the GP Locum Program, please contact locum@ntphn.org.au

Clincs
To request a GP locum, complete and return the Locum Request Form to locum@ntphn.org.au
To advertise for permanent General Practitioner vacancy, please contact recruitment@ntphn.org.au
To advertise for a permanent Allied Health vacancy, please contact alliedhealth@ntphn.org.au

General Practitioners
To register as a Northern Territory PHN GP locum, please contact locum@ntphn.org.au