

GP Locum Program – General Practitioner Overview

June 2016 – June 2019, updated 24 April 2019

Rural Workforce Agency NT (RWA NT) provides professional support to General Practitioners and health services through a number of programs, one of which is the General Practitioner Locum (GP locum) program. This program provides a locum matching and placement service to support permanent General Practitioners taking annual and study leave, but also assists health services with a resident general practitioner vacancy.

RWA NT can assist with GP locum placements at Aboriginal Controlled Community health services and private general practices in remote communities and towns throughout the Northern Territory.

WHAT SUPPORT DOES THE GP LOCUM PROGRAM PROVIDE?

- Access to a maintained register of current GP locums
- proactively advertises GP locum vacancies
- undertakes screening and credentialing of all GP locums, and monitors these prior to a locum placement
- matches a registered GP locum to a vacancy to ensure a good job fit for the role and health service
- coordinates contractual agreement between RWA NT and GP locum
- 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).

REGISTER AS A GP LOCUM

Working as a GP locum in the NT 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 NT, are invited to register with the RWA NT.

If you do not have experience working as a General Practitioner in the NT, some orientation supports may be provided to you including Aboriginal cultural awareness training and locally relevant medical resources.

SCREENING OF GP LOCUMS

All general practitioners registering as a GP locum undergo a recruitment and screening process through RWA NT. The screening and recruitment process ensures that GP locums are prepared for placements in a variety of regional and remote settings.

RWA NT requires new GP locums meet the following criteria:

- 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
- current Medicare Prescriber Number
- current Medical Indemnity Insurance
- up to date Curriculum Vitae (CV) and two professional referees (preferably 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 five years' General Practice experience
- previous experience with Aboriginal health
- skills in emergency medicine, trauma and life support
- procedural skills for example obstetrics, anaesthetics
- four wheel driving skills (for regional/remote areas).

The final requirement of the recruitment and screening process is an interview with a RWA NT Clinical Advisor. The interview establishes your interests and skills and where you may be best suited to start your locum work with RWA NT.

CODE OF CONDUCT

In signing the terms of the contract for the Provision of Services, the general practitioner 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 RWA NT GP locum code of conduct.

HOW DO I ARRANGE TO DO A GP LOCUM PLACEMENT?

To be considered for a GP locum placement, the GP locum must be registered with RWA NT's GP locum program. To do this, a general practitioner must have completed the above screening and recruitment process, including the clinical advisor interview.

RWA NT maintains a register of General Practitioners willing to provide GP locum services through urban, rural and remote health services and clinics. RWA NT may contact active GP locums to seek their interest in a placement; or the GP locum may contact RWA NT to express their interest in being considered for a GP locum placement advertised on RWA NT's website.

It is a requirement 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 RWA NT not making a placement recommendation.

If a GP locum is interested in being considered for a particular placement and they are registered, RWA NT will submit the GP locums' CV to the relevant health service for consideration. For this reason, GP locums are requested to maintain a current resume on file with RWA NT.

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?

Locum placements are available in the following circumstances:

- a general practitioner in the clinic is taking annual or study leave for a period of two weeks or more (however shorter periods may be negotiated)
- the health service has a permanent general practitioner vacancy which is currently being advertised.

Once the terms and conditions of the placement are agreed, the GP locum enters into a Contract for the Provision of Services with RWA NT for the placement; whilst the health service sign a RWA NT 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:

- orientation to the clinic and the community
- suitable accommodation for the duration of the placement
- air travel (bookings generally arranged by RWA NT). Fares are economy class. Fare upgrades, requested stopovers and excess baggage are to be paid by the GP locum unless otherwise negotiated
- 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)

- payment for relevant land permits (if required).

The following may also be provided, however must be confirmed with the health service for each individual placement:

- public holidays (and/or sorry days) where the GP locum is not required to work
- 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 or 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 RWA NT locum support officer 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) and the RWA NT 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 RWA NT 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 the completed locum evaluation on clinic form to RWA NT at the end of a placement.

Rural Workforce Agency NT Responsibilities:

- coordinate all logistics associated with the GP locum placement, including verification of credentials.
- 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.

For the 2018 to 2019 financial year, RWA NT will provide the following subsidies to GP locums who completed GP locum placements with both Aboriginal community controlled health services and private health clinics located within Modified Monash Model MMM2, MMM6, and MMM7.

GP Locum Incentives
<p>Locum Placement Bonus: \$1000</p> <p>A flat rate, one off payment will be made to the GP locum for completion of a continuous four-week placement. The Contract for the Provision of Services must state a minimum of <i>20 working days</i>.</p>
<p>Travel Allowance: \$400</p> <p>A flat rate one off payment will be paid for any GP locum required to travel from residence outside of placement dates listed in the Contract for the Provision of Services. If GP locum travels during placement dates, then this allowance is not applicable.</p>
<p>Public Holiday Payment (non-worked): \$400</p> <p>If a public holiday falls within the GP locum placement period, is not worked, and is not paid by the health service, a partial subsidy will be paid to the GP locum.</p> <p>This allowance is not applicable if the health services pays the GP locum for the public holiday (non-worked).</p>

If you require more information about the GP Locum Program or wish to register as a GP locum, please contact

The Locum Coordinator:

t 08 8982 1011

e locum@ntphn.org.au