



# Using a recruitment agency

## What to expect

When engaging the services of a recruitment agency to source a medical practitioner for a locum or long term placement, employers should expect a high level of professionalism and understanding from their agency.

### What to look for in your agency

- An in depth understanding of medical recruitment requirements and regulations in Australia.
- An understanding of immigration requirements in Australia. A person providing immigration assistance and advice must be registered with the Office of the Migration Agents Registration Authority (Office of the MARA).
- A high standard of ethics and professional conduct.
- Confidentiality and privacy.
- Clarity and definition on terms, conditions, fees and the 'small print'.
- Licensure – in Western Australia (WA) all individuals, partnerships or bodies corporate (companies and other incorporated bodies) who carry on business as employment agents (with a physical presence in WA) must be licensed under the *Employment Agents Act 1976* (the Act) with the Department of Consumer and Employment Protection.
- Regular communication and follow up.
- Thorough screening of potential candidates, including detailed curriculum vitas, references, clinical interviews, medical indemnity and evidence of continuing professional development should be made available upon request.

### Practice responsibilities

It is important to note that an employer is solely responsible for assessing the appropriateness of a candidate for the position. The following preparation by a general practice for employing a new medical practitioner is recommended:

- Carefully consider the curriculum vitae and experience for suitability to your practice needs.
- Conduct a clinical and personal interview.
- Clarify whether the medical practitioner has or will have any conditions or restrictions on his or her practice, such as Area of Need, District of Workforce Shortage or Medical Board supervision requirements.
- Provide the medical practitioner with a detailed job description including practice and after-hours requirements.
- Provide a detailed and comprehensive contract or employment agreement including salary conditions, arrangements for personal and study leave, probation period, etc.
- Provide the medical practitioner with town or regional profile including, location, housing, schools, child care, places of worship, distance to regional centres, shopping, local industry and support services.
- Maintain accurate and reliable records of immigration details, copies of visa and sponsorship approvals and expiration dates, Medical Board registration dates and conditions of practice, Medicare provider number issue and expiration dates, if any, and Area of Need status of your practice including expiration dates.
- Provide practice policies and procedures.

Whilst all care has been taken in preparing this document, this information is a guide only and subject to change without notice.

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## Agency responsibilities

A recruitment agency will support the general practice (the client) and the candidate (any individual introduced to a client by the agency) to secure an ideal match, for short or long term placements.

The agency's terms and conditions should be presented to the client at commencement of the proceedings.

Ensure there is clear understanding of clauses and inclusions such as:

- Fees: These are usually based on a percentage of the candidate's gross income of the first 12 months of the placement or pro rata if a fixed term of less than 12 months. This may include bonus payments, non-cash benefits and other allowances.
- Due date of fees: This may involve a split payment. For example, at acceptance of the candidate and then at commencement of the placement.
- Late payment fees.
- Additional costs such as immigration and medical board fees. These may be allocated for the client or candidate to pay.
- Screening: Determine the guarantees and preliminary checks in place by the agency to assess the candidate suitability for the placement.
- Introduction fees: This may be applicable if the candidate is introduced to the client by the agency and then engaged within a specified period. For example, if the agency introduces a candidate to a client, the client cannot employ the candidate without involving the agency.
- In the case of the candidate not commencing or not staying for the term of the agreement, confirm what replacement guarantees, refunds or credits are available to the client.

## Services

The client should also clarify with the agency the services that will be included in their fee and the level of involvement expected from the client. This can be particularly important for the recruitment of an international medical graduate. The following services may incur additional charges.

- Submitting and following up on Medical Board, Australian Medical Council (AMC) or specialist medical college applications, interviews and outcomes.
- Applications for:
  - Medicare provider numbers to enable billing through Medicare, providing specialist

referrals, requesting pathology and radiology examinations.

- Rural Other Medical Practitioners Scheme (ROMPS) to enable billing at the A1 Medicare rebate for non-vocationally recognised medical practitioners who are providing general practice services in eligible rural and remote areas.
- Hospital credentialing requirements from the WA Country Health Service (WACHS) to permit visiting, admitting or emergency department rights.

- Submission of Area of Need or District of Workforce Shortage applications, if required.
- Immigration information, forms, submissions.
- Medical indemnity.
- Private health insurance.
- Clinical and cultural orientation.
- Travel and accommodation arrangements.

## Professional standards and associations

Agency services should comply with professional standards and associations including:

- Recruitment and Consulting Services Association of Australia and New Zealand (RCSA)
- The Association of Medical Recruiters of Australia and New Zealand (AMRANZ)
- Department of Consumer and Employment Protection, Western Australia (DOCEP)

## See also

Practice Assist Fact Sheets:

- Employment Contracts and Agreements
- Locum placements - Orientation checklist
- Locum placements - Responsibilities and obligations
- Sponsoring international workers
- GP Start Up Pack

Practice Assist Templates:

- Position description – General practitioner
- Position description – Medical receptionist
- Position description – Nurse practitioner
- Position description – Practice manager
- Position description – Practice nurse