

What is the 10 Year Moratorium?

Under [Section 19AB](#) of the [Health Insurance Act 1973](#), international medical graduates (IMGs) are restricted on where they can work and access Medicare benefits.

With restrictions placed on their Medicare provider number for a period of 10 years, IMGs are required to work in a Distribution Priority Area (DPA) if they are a GP or a District of Workforce Shortage (DWS) area if they are a non-GP specialist.

An IMG is classified as a person who:

- completed a medical degree outside of Australia or New Zealand
- completed a medical degree in Australia or New Zealand as a temporary resident.

Known as the 10 year moratorium, the restrictions remain in place until the service period is completed and the doctor becomes a permanent resident or Australian citizen.

10 year moratorium scaling

Through 10 year moratorium scaling, GPs and non-GP specialists can work in more remote locations to reduce the amount of time they are required to work in DPA and DWS areas by up to 5 years.

The more remote a location is, the more scaling credits will be applied to their 10 year moratorium service requirements. Once the doctor meets the requirements of Section 19AB and 19AA, they will be able to work in any location across Australia.

How does the scaling work?

Moratorium scaling will be applied when IMGs meet the following conditions:

- Work is undertaken in an eligible regional or remote area under Section 19AB.
- Claims are submitted for Medicare Benefit Schedule items for services provided.
- There is a monthly billing threshold of \$5,000.

Medicare automatically calculates and applies the scaling credits based on Medicare billing data.

When a doctor works in multiple areas during a month and the \$5,000 threshold is reached, the scaling credit will be based on the location where the most billing occurred.

Scaling credits and moratorium end dates can be checked by setting up a [Health Professional Online Services \(HPOS\)](#) account.

IMGs who are participating in the 5 Year Overseas Trained Doctor (OTD) Scheme are not eligible to receive scaling credits towards their 10 year moratorium.

How are scaling credits calculated?

Scaling credits are calculated using the Australian Statistical Geographical Classification - Remoteness Area system as outlined in the table below.

Area	RA Category	Monthly scaling credit	Potential moratorium period
RA 1	Major cities	Nil	10 years
RA 2	Inner regional	3.37 days	9 years
RA 3	Outer regional	13 days	7 years
RA 4	Remote	20.3 days	6 years
RA 5	Very remote	30.4 days	5 years

Further information

To find out more about the 10 year moratorium and potential scaling credits, visit the [Australian Government Department of Health website](#).

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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