



What to do When a Doctor is Leaving your Practice

When a doctor announces he/she is leaving your practice there is a range of things to consider and prepare.

Medicare Australia

- Complete and sign manual Medicare and Department of Veterans' Affairs batch forms for any late claims.
- Request that the departing doctor write a letter to Medicare Australia requesting the closure of any provider number(s), including satellite practices or hospitals, but delay submitting this until all billing is complete.
- Inform Health Professional Online Services within 14 days which will update a range of services such as:
 - The practice Healthcare Provider Organisation (HPI-O) and the medical practitioner's Healthcare Provider Identifier (HPI-I)
 - Practice Incentives Program (PIP)
 - Australian Immunisation Register
 - National Bowel Cancer Screening Program

Policies and procedures

- If the doctor is remaining in the local area, expect some patients to request a transfer of medical records. Develop a transfer of medical records policy.
- Arrange for patient health summaries to be available if no in-practice hand-over is available.
- Review incoming pathology, radiology or specialist report viewing procedures to ensure appropriate follow up.

Human resources

- If your practice is in a fluctuating District of Workforce Shortage, request that the departing doctor complete a statutory declaration stating the he/she will no longer be practising in your Statistical Local Area (SLA).
- Collect a forwarding address, email and telephone numbers for sending out annual PAYG payment summaries, forwarding mail, etc.
- If the departing doctor holds conditional medical board registration and is under supervision, the practice will need to notify AHPRA of his/her departure.
- If the departing doctor is sponsored for work rights in Australia (for example on a sub class 457 visa) be aware of your obligations as a sponsor and notify the Department of Immigration (DIAC) of certain events. For example:
 - Sponsors must pay reasonable and necessary travel costs to enable their sponsored workers and their family members to leave Australia.
 - The sponsor must keep records of their compliance with all obligations.
 - If the primary sponsored person's employment ceases, or is expected to cease, DIAC must be notified within 10 working days of the primary sponsored person ceasing employment.
 - If the sponsor has become insolvent or the legal entity of the sponsor ceases to exist.

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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Communication

- Advise patients of the approaching departure via a notice in the waiting room.
- Complete hand-over of any chronic or high care patients to another medical practitioner.
- Advise stakeholders such as Practice Assist, Rural Health West, your PHL, regional hospital and aged care facilities.

More information

For your **Statistical Local Area** (SLA) visit www.doctorconnect.gov.au – search the map for your location under the District of Workforce Shortage layer and the SLA will be listed.

Department of Immigration

For the full list of sub class 457 conditions and notifiable changes to circumstances, please visit:

<http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/skilled-workers/sbs/certain-events-occur.htm>

<http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/booklets/books9.pdf>

See also

Practice Assist Fact Sheet:

- Sponsoring International Workers

Practice Assist Template:

- Position Description – General Practitioner

Practice Assist Check List:

- GP Start-Up Pack