

## **Advantages and Disadvantages of GP Locum Work**

### Advantages

Advantages of locum work Disadvantages of locum work.

A potentially high degree of autonomy over working hours and place of work.

A chance to work in a variety of different environments.

Work can be taken on around other professional and/or family commitments.

You can choose to take breaks from working, for example to travel or pursue other projects.

Working commitments are more rigidly defined and do not involve the managerial concerns that partners have.

Locuming is one way to make your name known locally and may put you in a stronger position when more permanent or alternative leadership posts become available.

By negotiating pay, dealing with invoicing and sorting out taxes locums learn small business skills useful in running a practice or working in commissioning.

You should not need to negotiate with colleagues if you want time off at busy periods such as Christmas.

You may find that it is easier to move to another area to work and live than it would be as a partner.

### Disadvantages

Locums can become or feel isolated from other doctors (see Avoiding professional isolation).

Locum GPs are sometimes excluded from formal and informal information cascades and locality networking.

CPD and appraisal opportunities need different consideration in locum work (see Professional considerations for locums).

It can be harder to keep up to date with certain aspects of practice e.g. chronic disease management, baby clinics, updating computer skills.

You need to adjust to different work places quickly, and you will need to ensure a good induction where you work.

You may have to work with a lot of different computer systems and you will need to ensure that you have an individual log-in in each place of work.

Locuming can carry potential risks owing to poor induction, not being familiar with the patients, fewer chances for handover and case discussion.

You can miss out on patient continuity in short term jobs.

Locums must normally organise their own invoicing, accounts and pensions, unless working for an agency or employing an accountant to do this for them.

Uncertainty of income – if opportunities are in short supply locally you may face periods without work or long journeys to jobs.

Locuming can involve working at antisocial times such as bank holidays, Christmas etc. when locum work is more readily available.

No employee benefits e.g. sickness, maternity, study or annual leave, unless working for an agency.

Source: [Locum GP Handbook](#) (BMA, 2017)