



# Becoming a Locum Midwife

## Locum Midwife Introduction

### I. Course Objectives

- Students will be able to verbalize what locum midwife is
- Students will be able to verbalize the good candidate of a locum midwife
- Students will be able to verbalize why it is now the best time to consider doing midwife locum assignment
- Students will be able to verbalize the different types of locum assignments
- Students will be able to verbalize the pros and cons of being a locum midwife

### II. What is a Locum Midwife?

- Helps deliver babies and provides patients and their babies with postnatal and antenatal care
- You can assist at a birthing center, a patient's home, or a hospital, and you work on a temporary basis when a facility needs additional help
- Your responsibilities include helping with the labor and delivery process of babies and assisting women throughout their pregnancy
- Other duties include assessing complications during pregnancy and childbirth, helping patients to understand their unique health needs during pregnancy, and helping with infant care and breastfeeding after birth

### III. Good Candidate for Being a Locum Midwife

- **Mindset**
  - Someone with positive outlook on challenges and willingness to try new things
  - Team player with willingness to help and go above and beyond typical midwife job description
- **Skills**
  - Must master numerous "soft" skills such as collaboration, communication (speaking, writing and listening, flexibility and time management)
  - Flexibility is essential as each new assignment presents unanticipated challenges
  - Core midwifery scope of practice competencies
- **Experience**
  - At least 2yrs (preferably 5yrs experience) of being a midwife
- **Willingness to be adaptable**
  - Each locum assignment will bring on new challenges, cultures to learn, and expectations of your role on the care team

- Must be able to defend safety and let go on things that are “just a different way of doing things”
- **Willingness to try things**
  - Know your skills and things you are willing to try
  - Always be willing to keep up with evidence based standards, attend conferences, and attend regular drills with staff to build up relationships and keep skills strong
- **Cultural diversity experience**
  - Constant training around different cultures may be caring for and their unique needs
  - Always keep in mind your biases and personal feelings about how care should be offered versus how a local community offers it to their patients
- **Easy to get along with**
  - Approachable and friendly
  - To be effective at your job, you need to gain the trust of physician colleagues and other medical staff
  - Affability speeds that process along
  - Perfecting this skill also facilitates glowing recommendations from colleagues that will help secure future assignments
  - Those born with a defective “affability gene” can cultivate it over time

#### **IV. Why is Now the Best Time to Consider Doing Midwife Locum Assignment?**

- **Higher Pay & Bonus Potential**
  - The money you can earn as a locum tenens midwife is almost always higher than what you would earn doing the same work as a permanent midwife
  - Locum tenens pay potential depends in part on your specialty and the needs of the facility, but midwife who take holiday assignments often find the pay differential is a big one
  - Whether you’re looking to put a little extra money aside or saving for the next big trip on your bucket list, the higher rates you can earn working locums can be a great way to add to your cash flow
  - Regardless of what you’re looking for, your recruiter can help you find jobs with the right pay structure to suit your needs.
- **Better Schedule Flexibility**
  - Need a break from working nights, call, or other shift constraints, but don’t want a break in your income stream
  - High demand for holiday locum tenens jobs often gives midwives the negotiating power to choose the schedule that works best for their family
  - Your recruiter can help you set limits on your hours, days, or other assignment particulars, so you can work when and how much you want to
- **Clinical Skill Development**
  - Even if you only take occasional assignments, working locums can be a practical strategy to keep your clinical skills sharp and broaden your experience
  - Many of locums providers say that regular exposure to new facilities and patient groups has helped them to expand their clinical and communication skills

- Holiday locum tenens jobs are a great way to explore different aspects of your practice without the long-term commitment
- **Giving Back in a Fulfilling Way**
  - The relief you bring to a facility by taking a locums assignment can make a huge difference to the permanent staff who could use a break during the holidays
  - Depression is a common problem during the holidays, when feelings of isolation or burnout can be intensified
  - Holiday locum tenens jobs are a great way to give back to your own community or help in an underserved rural location
  - So, if you want to make a difference for other providers and patients alike, holiday locum tenens jobs can be an easy way to give back in a meaningful way
- **Healthy Break From the Routine**
  - Taking a holiday assignment out of town can help you to have some time just for yourself
  - Whether you're a full-time locum or just interested in an occasional locum tenens assignment on the side, holiday assignments can be an effective way to keep your professional and financial goals on track and maybe even take a little time for yourself

## V. Different Types of Locum Assignments

- **Timeline**
  - Requested time commitment may range from a single block of time (for example, when a local provider is planning on going on vacation and the facility is seeking temporary coverage) to ongoing and nearly full-time coverage with the prospect of transitioning to a permanent position
  - May cover weekend call once a month for next year
  - Typically 3-6 month contracts as full time midwife on the care team
- **Facility Types**
  - Hospitals
  - Clinics
  - Birth Centers
  - Home Birth Practices
- **Scope of Services**
  - Can range greatly within midwifery scope of practice
    - Laborist
    - Full scope (clinic and call)
    - Clinic only
    - Administration
    - Educator
- **Compensation Rate Options**
  - Hourly
  - On Call Pay
  - Call In Pay
  - Overtime
  - Bonuses

## VI. Pros and Cons of Becoming a Locum Midwife

### Pros

- **You can Travel Across US and Abroad**
  - Readily available across the country and in many locations around the world—from Australia and China to the UK and Caribbean
  - If you're leaving the province, expect some paperwork up front, with additional administration requirements for international locum positions
- **You're in Control of How Much You Work and Terms of the Assignment that Fits Your Needs Best**
  - Work a little, work a lot, it's up to you as a locum
  - New midwives often choose to run a full time practice and take on additional locum work during evenings and weekends for extra income
  - Some midwives might exclusively seek part-time locum work or schedule intentional breaks for family and travel between full-time locum tenens positions to ensure a consistent work/life balance
- **You Should Have Plenty of Time for Patients**
  - Depending on the locum role you choose, you can likely look forward to spending your entire day focused solely on patient care without the heavy time and cost commitment of running a practice
  - No requirement for attending staffing meetings, quality commitments, and typical employment trainings
- **Locum Work is Readily Available**
  - Locum midwives are in high demand abroad and nationally
  - Some specialties in particular are especially sought after, leading to the potential for higher incomes and an abundance of choices in locations, hours and positions

### Cons

- **Not Your Practice, Not Your Rules**
  - When you run your own practice, you're in charge
  - As a locum, however, for the most part you will be expected to follow the procedures in place where you work (even if you have the experience to improve things)
- **Everything's New Every Time**
  - Each locum job will come with new technology, new colleagues, new workplace culture and new patients
  - Navigating this steep learning curve over and over again is not for everyone
- **You are Constantly on the Hunt for the Next Job**
  - While locum work is plentiful, locum positions are often short—from a couple of days or weeks abroad to a couple of years abroad
  - Your ideal locum location or timing may not always be available, and you may feel like you're constantly combing locum job sites to string together consistent work that meets all of your criteria

- **Too Much Locum Work can Lead to Burnout**
  - While locum work on its own often results in a better work/life balance, it's easy to overdo it
  - For example, if you're running your own practice while also filling evenings and weekends with locum work, watch for signs of midwife burnout

## **VII. Conclusion**

- Deciding to become a locum midwife can be an exciting decision, but needs lots of consideration of your short and long term goals
- Think about the things you currently like and don't like about your midwifery role
  - Locum will provide you more flexibility in scheduling, traveling opportunities, independent contract perks, new work environments to be part of at regular intervals
  - There are no benefits like health insurance or retirement packages, orientation, and colleague relationships like a permanent staff would have
- There is a unique personality and mindset that locum midwives needs to have: strong clinica and leadership skills, adaptability, easy to work with others, and ability to solve challenges quickly and easily that arise
- Make a goals of why you are considering becoming a locum midwife and how that will be accomplished

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