

Locum practical CONSIDERATIONS

Being a locum can be a tough job. Arriving and starting immediately can be a nightmare if both the practice and the doctor are not well prepared, but a little forethought and planning can help all concerned get the best out of this relationship and make everyone eager to meet again

Preparing a practice locum pack can really pay dividends but please make sure that it is sent in advance or if that's not possible, that someone takes a few minutes to quickly work through it with the locum on arrival. Here are a few good practice pointers:

AGREED DUTIES

Is everyone clear about what the locum will do? Is this just straight cover for surgery only or do you want house calls, and the processing of the absent doctor's pathology reports and other paperwork?

APPOINTMENT TIMES

How long do you allow for initial appointments? What is the policy for non-emergency over-runs?

PRACTICE IT SYSTEMS

Is the locum familiar with your system? Have they used it recently or would they benefit from coming in 30 minutes earlier for a refresher? Do you have someone who can do this and have they been asked to come in early too?

REFERRAL PROCEDURES

As per IT – do they know how things operate in your practice?

PRESCRIBING GUIDANCE

Do you have a modified or restricted formulary? Do you prefer generics to brand? One surgery we know produced a directory of the most popular branded medications with their generic names alongside – and realised considerable savings.

SHARED EQUIPMENT

Which room is it in? A simple list can save time and embarrassment.

STANDARD FORMS AND TEMPLATES

A simple file containing examples and a note of where to find them in hard copy or in which file on the computer will help ensure things are done as you'd like them to be.

WHO'S WHO

When you're a locum it's often hard to remember names and roles. Who do you phone if you need a chaperone? A simple list with phone numbers for practice staff, and key outside contacts can save time and help keep your surgery running smoothly.

TRAVEL AND PARKING

When we sit in the same traffic jam everyday we take it for granted. When you're a locum, knowing that the last mile may take you 40 minutes will make all the difference to arriving calm and on time or late and flustered. If you don't have on-site parking, do they need change for a meter or machine?

MEET, GREET, THANK AND BANK

It takes just five minutes to quickly introduce the locum to the team and provide a welcome and much appreciated cuppa. And at the end of the day, a little feedback, a thank you and agreement of the timesheet and payment process, will end the session on a professional and friendly note. ❖

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