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Locum Tenens / Permanent Placement

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## Providing Resources To Residents

### Family Practice In Antarctica **By Christine Deneau**

The truth behind the saying that a Doctor can practice medicine anywhere holds true even in Antarctica...the coldest place on the planet. Dr Kevin Marler first signed up as a locum tenens contractor through Harris Medical Associates to work for Raytheon at their research facility in Antarctica. It was not long before he became a permanent employee of Raytheon and their primary Physician for the facility.



Stationed at the Palmer Sound facility, Dr. Marler shares the adventure with about 40 other employees. The work week is busy as he regularly puts in over 60 hours. His job as the resident Physician is only part of his duties as you can imagine. Deployments to the station last about 6 months. Upon returning state side, it gives him a chance to catch up with family and experience other practice settings as a locum tenens physician.

Dr. Marler states that it is a great opportunity to experience this great adventure with a team of highly educated professionals. Being able to practice medicine and get back to the very fundamentals of healthcare has been an inspiration. In addition to being a Physician, Dr. Marler is able to participate in much of the research performed at this station. From the effects of global warming to environmental issues and wildlife management, Dr. Marler has been able to expand his horizons both professionally and personally while in Antarctica.

### Government Contracting...Is It Right for Me?

**By Mark Stinnett**

It is no secret that we are in an era of significant demand for healthcare professionals of all disciplines and modalities. Federal, state and local government entities are not immune to this increased demand and are aggressively seeking Physicians to meet their requirements. This would include practice settings not only here in the US, but around the world as well.

The Federal Government obviously is the largest government entity employing or contracting for Physician care through the VA Healthcare System, Department of Defense, Department of Health and Human Services and Indian Health Services to name a few. At the state level, Departments of Mental Health continually seek Family Practice and Mental Health Professionals for various state run facilities. In each case, opportunities are available to you in a variety of formats.

First of all, Government entities often seek physicians as employees, offering to them secure opportunities complete with benefits, bonuses and retirement options. Although compensation can and often does fall short of that offered at commercial locations, these opportunities should be evaluated based on its own merit and the value

it offers you individually. Secondly, opportunities are available to you as an independent contractor to participate in both short term and long term arrangements through agencies. Generally, these opportunities offer market driven compensation plans and flexibility on your part as far as the duration of the assignment. Naturally, status as an independent contractor means you are responsible for providing your own benefits and retirement instruments. In most cases, federal opportunities do not require you to have a license in the state the facility is located. State and local opportunities do require this however.



## More Residents Opt For Locum Tenens **By Chuck Harris**



*Experience the Difference!*

My career in physician "locum tenens" staffing and permanent recruitment has spanned 26 years. I have had the unique perspective to view the evolution of the Locum Tenens market. As the title indicates, it is truly incredible the number of residents who are now electing the locum tenens route (test drive) before deciding to take on their first permanent position. I heard a speech a few years back at the national meeting of the American Academy of Family Physicians in San Francisco from a demographic/research specialist who stated that the average physician moves 4.2 times in a career.

How do you know if the offer you have will be the right fit? Why should you? Understandably, you have been working long hours in tough rotations, learning your specialty. You may have limited real world perspective to "compare and contrast" as to what is best for you and your family. I have seen residents 3 months into a permanent position realizing they made a huge mistake. Recent studies show that 18% of Physicians working as a locum tenens provider are doing so until they find a new permanent position that works best for them. Additionally, 14% of the locum tenens population have been practicing for 5 years or less.

Here are some key points to consider as you evaluate locum tenens as a career choice once your training is complete: **1)** Travel to experience different lifestyles and work environments (in most cases, opportunities with the Federal Government do not require a license in the state it is located); **2)** Control of your schedule...work as much or as little as you want; **3)** Compensation is market driven and generally on par with permanent positions. Additionally, your housing and transportation costs are paid for by the Client or Agency; **4)** Avoid the politics of medicine.

As you consider the options afforded you after training, I encourage you to give relevance to those options that best suit your financial, family and lifestyle goals. Understand that experience is often the best resource and can prove to be invaluable in determining if a permanent offer is appropriate for you.

**You learn more from your failures than your successes.**

**You can't borrow yourself out of debt.**

**Don't jump in and make rash decisions. They will come back and haunt you.**

## So...What's A 1099???

**By Yesica Juarez**

In a traditional employer / employee relationship, the employer must withhold income taxes, withhold and pay social security and Medicare taxes, and pay unemployment tax on wages paid to you. Should you choose to contract as an independent contractor, the organization you are providing services for is not obligated to withhold or pay these taxes.

As an independent contractor you are required to manage your tax liability and pay estimated taxes quarterly. You will receive a 1099 Form annually from each group or

organization you provided services for stating your income rather than the traditional W-2 form. It is your responsibility to pay the required taxes on this income.

The IRS maintains a specific criterion that determines whether or not for whom you are contracting can contract with you as an independent contractor. For this reason, it is suggested you consult your financial advisor or CPA before choosing to work other than an employee.

You should also consider the advantages of contracting as

an independent contractor. Many Physicians choose this course in order to maintain a more flexible work schedule. Additionally it allows them to contract for a variety of unique and different practice environments and travel with their work.

For some Physicians receiving a 1099 and working as an independent contractor allows them to offset income with approved expense deductions as provided for by the IRS. You should consult your financial advisor or CPA for more information on this topic and how it will work for you.

## CV, Certifications, Employment History...Who Cares...? **By Janet Reeves**

Whether you are a solo practitioner, independent contractor or employee, your credentials and the documents that validate them are critical to managing your career. Should you elect to obtain a new state license, hospital privileges or even contract with an agency, documented evidence of your education, certifications, license(s), malpractice, controlled substance registration and previous places of employment are required. Security background checks are not uncommon these days so being prepared to provide up to 7 years of past residences and points of contact to verify it are to be expected as well. Gathering these items up when needed can be time consuming, in-convenient and at times stressful. To help you manage these items, consider the following list of suggested actions designed to keep you current and in good order with your credentials.

1. Scan all your professional documents individually and store electronically. This will enable you to print, email, fax or mail copies of them when needed
2. **MAINTAIN A BACK-UP COPY AND STORE IN A SAFE/ SECURE STORAGE BOX**
3. Keep a log of these documents and record expiration / renewal dates. Set-up a "tickler" notice at least 30 days prior to renewal dates
4. Record malpractice policy numbers, dates of coverage and contact info
5. Review your documents at least twice annually to make sure you have the most current
6. Keep your CV current with all places of employment listed and all gaps in employment accounted for