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## Looking at Locum Tenens After Residency: What Can Residents Do to Prepare?

### Announcer Introduction:

Welcome to *Spotlight on Locum Tenens* on ReachMD. This episode is sponsored by CHG Healthcare. Here's your host, Dr. Paul Doghramji.

### DR. DOGHRAMJI:

This is *Spotlight on Locum Tenens* on ReachMD. I'm Dr. Paul Doghramji, and joining me to discuss ways to prepare for locum tenens while still in residency is Dr. Mojgan Saber, an assistant professor in the Division of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles. Dr. Saber, welcome to the program.

### DR. SABER:

Thank you so much for having me.

### DR. DOGHRAMJI:

So, Dr. Saber, can you begin by telling us about your personal experience with locum tenens right after residency?

### DR. SABER:

Sure, I would love to. To start with the way it happened for me, I was doing my residency at the UCLA V.A. in Los Angeles. And when I finished because I love traveling, I have a passion for traveling and I didn't want to just sign up with one job and stay I wanted to travel so I took a few months went away to Europe, and of course I wasn't planning it well and I don't recommend that to our resident's future positions. So I ran out of money pretty quickly, and so I came back after a few months with no job. Of course, I could get a job quick, but if I wanted to sign in I had to go on several interviews and it locum so I started doing locum because I got paid pretty quickly. And I needed that money. And as a result, I learned about locum. I didn't know anything about it. And I just started doing it, I loved it. And it took me to places from Fresno to Fairfield by Napa to Miami west to east, then to Midwest back to Northwest and now I'm back in LA. So that's how I started doing locum.

### DR. DOGHRAMJI:

It's very interesting. So based on your experience, what would you say are some of the biggest benefits you enjoyed working as a locum tenens after residency?

### DR. SABER:

Well on a personal level I am so passionate about traveling, and locum allowed me to travel because I'm more free with my time. One of the big benefits of doing locum is you can pick your time, when you want to do it, how busy you want to be, where you want to work. And this was amazing for me because I could choose where I wanted to work. I usually chose new places so I could learn about that place. Meanwhile, I'm working, making money, meeting new people getting to know new places. I worked with different people learn different systems at different hospital, and it made me more flexible. Growth and learning has always been big for me. And I think locum tenens helped me grow personally in an amazing way to all meeting different people, different cultures, different places.

### DR. DOGHRAMJI:

So on the flip side, what would you say were the disadvantages or drawbacks of doing locum tenens?

### DR. SABER:

Honestly, because of the person I am, for me, I didn't feel many disadvantages at all. But I can imagine if somebody has a family, they have children, it may be a little difficult because you do move from place to place. So living in a hotel, or even a house if you have

children, they need to go to school in the same place. And this may be difficult for a family also. If you have a partner and they have a permanent job in another city, then the distance may be an issue. Of course, at the time, I didn't have any of those, so it wasn't an issue for me. Also, if you're by yourself, I could see maybe feeling lonely, but, if your passion is traveling and you like new things and, you know, like exploring new learning, again that wouldn't be an issue, because when I went to these places I looked up what was happening around, festivals, what are the new places, what are the cities close to that I could explore. And I was always busy with those things. So I found it really good. But I would say, to sum it up, disadvantage, may be feeling lonely or the stability, that security that some people may enjoy and look forward to.

DR. DOGHRAMJI:

For those just joining us, this is *Spotlight on Locum Tenens* on ReachMD. I'm Dr. Paul Doghramji, and I'm speaking with Dr. Mojgan Saber about his experiences working as locum tenens right after residency.

DR. DOGHRAMJI:

Dr. Saber, now that we've learned about your own personal experience, let's explore how other residents can prepare for this line of work. What are some recommended first steps residents should take if they are interested in locum tenens career right after residency?

DR. SABER:

Well, I think they should research different locum tenens companies. There are plenty of information online, and then they can make some calls to those company, kind of get a sense of what's needed to start that position at different states, maybe look into Interstate Medical Licensure Compact. Once you have that, you're able to more quickly get licensed in different states. Also talk to friends, colleagues who've done locums before, maybe get ideas about the daily rates or the hours, calls, weekend, holidays, because their rate changes for those. Make sure they have malpractice, so they're covered once they work at these facilities. Also look into maybe setting up a corporation because most of these companies pay on a 1099, which the residents are going to be independent contractors. Also learn more maybe about different computer systems at different hospitals. The two main ones are Epic and Cerner. Even though most of them do have some training, a couple hours, it's a quick training, so it helps if they're more prepared ahead of time and then take it from there.

DR. DOGHRAMJI:

Okay, so that's all very helpful information. Now, along those same lines, Dr. Saber, can you share a few resources residents can look to if they're in the process of pursuing locum tenens work?

DR. SABER:

There's a physician guide to locum tenens by a Dr. Cushing that's very helpful. Also, they can look up National Association of Locum Tenens. And they have a lot of information about working in locum tenens. Again looking into medical licensing for interstate. If they want to look it up, is [IMLCC.org](http://IMLCC.org). They have some information there not about locum, but about licensing which helps with locum. Also, there's tons of information online if they look up locum tenens. I think once you start looking, a lot of information comes.

DR. DOGHRAMJI:

Okay, and then once it's decision time what should they consider when choosing their first locum tenens assignment?

DR. SABER:

Well, the resident's future doctors should consider where they want to work, the location of the place they want to work. Do they want to work in a small town big town, that what specialty they're interested in, what facility, do they want to do inpatient, outpatient, how busy they want to be. These are all good considerations before starting. Because if you want to not work too much, and then you pick a busy facility, then you may be unhappy. But if you pick right, then you'll be happy doing the locum tenens. The residents have to look in to personally what their interests are, financially what they're looking for, and take it from there and make their decisions.

DR. DOGHRAMJI:

Okay, so before we close, Dr. Saber, do you have any final takeaways for residents who are interested in locum tenens work?

DR. SABER:

Yes, I recommend every resident who's interested in locum tenens reflect on themselves before starting the work in terms of their personality, in terms of emotionally, mentally, spiritually, what kind of things they're interested in, because this affects their future choosing of different positions. So, it's really good to know yourself, short-term goals, long-term goals the quality of life, what's important. That's really the main background of before starting the locum tenens to be successful in doing the job. So I highly recommend they just reflect on themselves and see what it is that they like, that way they can make the best decision for their future. Know that this involves a lot of traveling, living in hotels, not having a paycheck every month. So you may not have the security and stability, but then you are having the freedom of time and place and being able to travel and explore. So, if those are okay with them, then they could do it. If

they're more stable and need to be in one place, again, they have to consider what their interests are and what their life has to be, and they can take it from there and work successfully without any disappointments.

DR. DOGHRAMJI:

Well, you've certainly given us a lot of great guidance to those residents who might be considering locum tenens work. And I want to thank you, Dr. Saber, for joining me to share your experience and expert tips. It was great having you on the program.

DR. SABER:

Thank you for having me.

Announcer Close:

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