Why do physicians choose to work locum tenens? With a wide variety of benefits ranging from philosophical to financial, the reasons for working locums are nearly as varied as the number of medical specialties practiced today. You can use this helpful checklist to determine if locum tenens might be right for you.

1. **ARE YOU LOOKING FOR WORK/LIFE BALANCE AND CAREER FLEXIBILITY?**
   Taking care of yourself while caring for others can be one of the greatest challenges medical professionals face today. In fact, a 2012 survey published in the Archives of Internal Medicine reported that U.S. physicians experience more burnout from their jobs than other American workers. Working locums gives you space to breathe, a higher quality of life and lets you balance your work life with your family life because you get to choose when you work and where you work. So, whether you’re looking to spend more time with your kids, step back from work but not fully retire, or enjoy life’s other pursuits, locum tenens could be a great fit.

2. **DO YOU THRIVE IN CHANGING CLINICAL SETTINGS?**
   When you work a locums assignment, you’re brought on board to meet a need and solve problems for a practice, clinic or hospital, as well as to provide care to the patients they serve. Depending on the facility, these needs and problems could be very different than the professional and medical challenges you’ve faced before, which means being a locum tenens physician requires a healthy degree of flexibility and adaptability. Working locums requires the confidence that you can practice great medicine, regardless of where you are practicing, and that you’re comfortable outside your normal comfort zone.

3. **WOULD YOU PREFER TO NOT PAY FOR YOUR OWN INSURANCE?**
   Insurance costs are sky high and seem to be getting higher all the time. Working locum tenens is a great way to get someone else to foot the bill. While many locum tenens firms only offer claims-made coverage, which only covers a physician if incidents occur and claims are reported during the active period of the policy, some firms offer occurrence form insurance. The time period for coverage under an occurrence form policy is unlimited, which means you get the most comprehensive coverage and there’s no need to buy a tail policy.
4. **WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY OUT A NEW POSITION BEFORE COMMITTING TO ANYTHING PERMANENT?**

From residency to nearing retirement, no matter what phase of your career you’re in, locum tenens can help you make sure that you’re making all the right career moves. After all, what you see in the interview isn’t always what you get in the actual position. Locum tenens allows you to gain hands-on experience in a position, helping you to make a far more informed decision about whether a position is a good fit and where you’re going to make your permanent home.

5. **ARE YOU STRUGGLING TO SUPPORT A PRIVATE PRACTICE DUE TO COMPLIANCE COSTS?**

As you probably know all too well, doctors are increasingly faced with more and more compliance-related costs in their practice. In today's highly regulated healthcare environment, even billing has become an extremely scrutinized endeavor, and physicians can be fined, lose their billing privileges or even be jailed for not billing correctly. In addition, HIPAA requirements, the Affordable Care Act, electronic medical records and an array of other new mandates, laws and regulations make practicing medicine more complex and more expensive than ever before, and all signs point toward healthcare continuing to trend in that direction. Working locums frees you from those frustrations and expenses, allowing you to enjoy life and practicing medicine even more.

6. **DO YOU LIKE TO TRAVEL AND EXPLORE NEW DESTINATIONS?**

In addition to test driving a position at a given clinic, practice or hospital, locum tenens allows you to try out a new region, state or town. The need for locum tenens physicians can be found across the country in rural and urban settings and everywhere in between, which means there are plenty of opportunities to experience new places before selecting a place to settle down with your family or solo. And if you don't want to settle down, that’s fine too. There are plenty of locums doctors that stay on the move. Either way, you’ll have a chance to explore the country often without spending a dime, as travel and housing are provided by the facility where you’re contracted.

7. **WOULD YOU LIKE TO AVOID THE ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS OF TRADITIONAL MEDICAL PRACTICE?**

Which is more satisfying? Paperwork or patients? It’s not hard to guess how you, as a physician, will answer that question. But in today’s healthcare environment, it’s not uncommon for doctors to get bogged down in administrative work and to spend nearly as much time on paperwork as they do with their patients. Locum tenens lets you step away from the business side of the healthcare profession and immerse yourself in what you do best -- treating patients and making a difference in the lives of others.

Want to learn more about locum tenens opportunities and the wide variety of benefits? As Your Proven Quality Partner in Medical Staffing, MDA is here to help. Send us an email at info@mdainc.com or give us a call at 1.800.780.3500 to start a conversation about your professional future today.