



# FLO

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

GLOBAL EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE

## Resources for Medical Professionals

### Introduction

This document serves as a resource and list of options for family members going overseas and seeking work in the medical profession. Individual country license restrictions and the need for knowledge of the local language may make finding work more difficult than in the U.S. Below you will find information and resources on working on the local economy, employment inside the mission, teleworking, commuting, and continuing education.

### Working in Your Host Country

#### Licensing

Most countries will not accept a U.S. medical license outright and will require a process to get medical licensure in the host country. This can range from minor paperwork to completing training and/or retaking licensing exams. Compounding the challenge is the fact that licensing requirements may change. A number of medical professional spouses in the Foreign Service have used crowdsourcing to develop a document repository for maintaining licensing information. This resource is available through the Google group described below. Other options for determining licensing requirements include contacting the medical unit at post to ask if they have an American-trained health care provider working on the local economy in a desired discipline and researching national medical associations at post for information and contacts. Direct email or telephone contact to subject matter experts in the host country might be necessary.

Determine exactly what documentation is necessary and explore all options. For example, would working as a nurse instead of a nurse practitioner require less paperwork? Perhaps consider volunteering without getting a host-country license or maybe working under another individual who is locally licensed. Each country's laws are different so networking and specific research can be crucial to success.

#### Information Gathering/Networking

If working legally in a desired profession is not possible, talk to both local and Foreign Service staff at post's medical unit as well as the Regional Medical Officer about possible local entities where a person might be able to volunteer or work. They will have visited or heard about most of the major medical facilities in the area. If USAID or the CDC is doing health programming in the host country, their health program managers might know about the need for outside medical expertise. Local staff at post often has excellent connections with the local ministries and NGOs.

Another place to look for potential contacts is within a personal network. Reach out to colleagues from former workplaces to see if they know anyone in the host country. Check medical associations to see if

there are any members residing and/or working in the host country. College or university alumni associations are also great resources.

### **Connecting with Fellow Family Members**

A few years ago a group of family members started the ***Health Care Providers and the Foreign Service Google group*** which includes doctors, nurses, physical therapists, and other ancillary medical providers such as social workers. The group shares information regarding job prospects at their respective posts and maintains a database on requirements for practicing in each country. They maintain a list of health care providers with contact information, area of specialization, and prior postings. Only members of the group can see the database and other resources.

Finally, LinkedIn is a great tool for finding contacts in country. *Be sure to change your LinkedIn location to the host country as this might trigger job announcements.*

### **Various Local Options**

Options to consider on the local economy:

- advising a branch in the ministry of health
- consulting or working for a non-governmental organization
- working as a nurse at an international school or filling in during absences
- working for a large international company (e.g., oil company contract medical staff serving expatriate employees)
- working as a public health educator
- teaching at a local university
- working in a local “expat” clinic or hospital
- working for one of the medical evacuation companies (if applicable) such as International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- working for a contracting company providing services to a government organization (e.g., Comprehensive Medical Services)

## **Working for the U.S. Department of State**

There are very few medical positions available inside the embassy. A larger post may have a physician and a nurse practitioner but most will only have a nurse practitioner who is a Foreign Service Specialist. Occasionally, there will be an Eligible Family Member position for a doctor, nurse, or a nurse practitioner. These positions pay in U.S. dollars, do not require you to speak the host country language, and do not require local licensing.

### **Foreign Service Specialists**

To be consistently employed as a spouse of a Foreign Service Officer, a Foreign Service Specialist, or another government employee serving overseas, consider becoming a Foreign Service Specialist. Approximately once or twice a year the Department of State announces openings for physicians, nurse practitioners, and psychiatrists. [Careers.state.gov](https://careers.state.gov) is the best place to research this career path. [Sign up](#) to receive automatic alerts regarding the application process.

Please note that if a spouse is with the Department of State, while there is no guarantee couples will be posted together, the Department of State will make an effort to assign the couple as a tandem. If a spouse is with another agency, proactivity is necessary to be assigned together. Please refer to the [Careers.state.gov](https://careers.state.gov) page forum on family life for more information on a tandem lifestyle.

## Eligible Family Members

FLO's Family Member Employment Report (FAMER) tracks Foreign Service family member employment worldwide. As an employee is bidding, this report will show if an EFM position for a nurse or physician exists at post. Sometimes a post will hire a nurse or physician on Temporary (TEMP) status and they will work While Actually Employed (WAE). These positions usually help fill in for the permanent staff on leave. Always contact post's Human Resources Department or the Medical Unit to confirm the number of medical EFM positions that exist at post, when they will likely be vacant, and if there are any positions being created.

Each year a small number of Expanded Professional Associate Positions (EPAP) open to registered nurses, nurse practitioners, and physicians. For more information visit the [EPAP webpage](#).

USAID and CDC have positions that manage health programs. Some of these are filled by family members. Candidates will need skills in program management and/or public health.

Apart from these positions, FLO is aware of no other health profession positions available with the U.S. Government overseas.

## Working Virtually

Telemedicine and eHealth have been growing. Several family members have successfully worked in positions while overseas, maintaining their legal home of residence in the U.S. More information on this field can be found at the [International Society for Telemedicine and eHealth](#) site.

Prior to committing to a position, check residential internet options and speed to be sure that the bandwidth is sufficient for the work. Permission is needed from the Chief of Mission to use a U.S. government residence for business purposes – this is usually obtained through the Management/HR Office at post. FLO has additional telework guidance. Email [FLOAskEmployment@state.gov](mailto:FLOAskEmployment@state.gov).

A limited number of entities that provide telemedicine positions are below. Find Additional positions can in FLO's [Resources for Working Virtually](#).

**Aetna** – Has various nursing jobs. Read through the careers section to learn more about working for this company. Click on the “Apply Online” button to search their current job openings. Enter "Nurse" as the keyword, select “Health Care” for the job group, and “Yes” in the potential telework position section.

**Consult a Doctor** – Physicians, counselors, and dermatologists. Telemedicine physicians are U.S. board-certified in internal medicine, pediatrics, emergency care, and family medicine. The physicians diagnose, treat and prescribe medications (if necessary) for common, non-urgent health issues.

**Doctor on Demand** – Physicians, Pediatrics, Psychologists, Lactation Consultants, Telemedicine provider.

**Exclusively RNs** – Registered Nurses - OB/GYN Telephone Triage. Requirements include a minimum of 2 years experience in women's healthcare, active RN license, good communication and computer skills, high speed internet, and dedicated phone line.

**FoneMed** - Registered Nurses - Telephone Triage. FoneMed's nurses work remotely from home providing telephone triage and health advice to callers. Minimum one year of recent experience in telephone triage and three years of recent clinical experience, pediatrics, and adult required.

**Health Joy** – Physicians. A new telemedicine company open to receiving inquiries from physicians.

**Humana**– Registered Nurses - Nursing Jobs. To find current work from home openings visit the Career Opportunities page and enter "work at home" in the keywords field and click the search button.

**Imaging on Call** – Radiologists. Provides 24-hour teleradiology.

**Insight Telepsychiatry** - Psychiatrists and psychiatric nurse practitioners. Telepsychiatry.

**McKesson** - Registered Nurses - Nursing Jobs. Look for the Job Search box and select "Nursing" as the job category. Leave the city and state blank and click on the search button to see current openings. Work from home positions have no city and state details.

**AALNC** - Legal Nurse Consultants. Remote Legal Nurse Consultants must have been clinically active for at least 10 years and have at least three years report writing experience. Strong written and verbal communication skills as well as intermediate computer skills are required.

**SHS, Inc.** – Medical writers.

**SironaHealth** - Registered Nurses - Nurse Consultants. Nurse Consultants must complete three weeks training in South Portland, Maine before being able to work at home. Qualifications include an active RN license plus a minimum of three years clinical experience in an acute or ambulatory care setting.

**The Truman Group**- Psychologists. Provides therapy to expatriates around the world—has hired family members.

**UnitedHealthGroup** - Registered Nurses - Various Nursing Jobs. UnitedHealth's Job Board lists various nursing jobs. Try using "telecommuting" or "work at home" in the keyword section and select "nursing" in the job field to find current job openings.

## Commuting

Family members at posts in Canada and Mexico who reside near the border have successfully commuted to jobs in the U.S. Post a message on the Health Care Providers and the Foreign Service Google group message board to solicit further information.

## Continuing Education

Many family members who are unable to find work overseas use the time at post to get advanced degrees or maintain certifications. FLO's Professional Development Fellowships can help cover licensing fees, CME credits, and tuition. The application season opens mid-March. Up-to-date information is on [FLO's website](#).

## Other Opportunities and Guidance

### **Locum Work**

Locum tenens work is available around the world for physicians, CRNAs, NPs and PAs. Consider taking one or more of these positions as necessary for income or to keep up a license. Employees can receive a letter of recommendation and maintain insurability. Common staffing agencies are [Weatherby Healthcare](#), [Vista](#) and [Staffcare](#) (See also [www.locumtenens.com](http://www.locumtenens.com).)

### **Medical Writing**

Many opportunities are available for strong writers who have a medical background. Go to the [American Medical Writers Association](#) for more information.

### **Emergency Medicine Volunteer Ambassador**

The American College of Emergency Medicine has an [International Ambassador program](#). Many countries have a physician contact who is the lead or deputy for various countries. They are tasked with awareness of the Emergency Medicine situation in their assigned countries and may be a resource for providing country-based contacts.

### **Malpractice Insurance**

In some developing countries American physicians have been known to practice without malpractice insurance. Depending on the applicable state law, this action may have serious ramifications for a state license in the U.S. **Consider purchasing private personal coverage in this situation.**

**IMPORTANT:** *The Family Liaison Office provides this information as a public service. Links DO NOT imply any endorsement of accuracy or quality of services.*