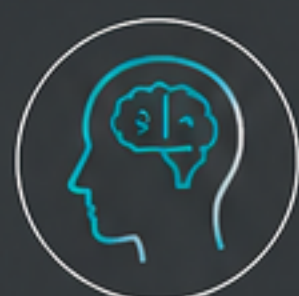


# QUEENSLAND LOCUM RATES HAVE CHANGED — BUT THAT COULD CREATE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR PSYCHIATRISTS

How B45 is changing the Queensland locum market, why some doctors are looking interstate, and how this could open access to hospitals and roles that were previously harder to secure.



**PSYCHIATRY LOCUM  
MARKET UPDATE | 2026**



SPECIALIST  
RECRUITERS



NATIONAL REACH  
LOCAL EXPERTISE



PEOPLE FIRST  
ALWAYS



# WHAT'S ACTUALLY CHANGING IN QUEENSLAND?



If you've worked as a locum psychiatrist in Queensland—or you're considering your next Queensland contract—you may already have noticed a shift in the market.

Queensland Health's **B45 policy** sets the framework for engaging contracted locum medical practitioners, including maximum daily rates, specialist loadings and regional loadings.

For some psychiatrists, the rates now available in Queensland may be less attractive than opportunities elsewhere.

And that's starting to influence where doctors choose to work.

## BUT THERE'S ANOTHER SIDE TO THE STORY.

When some doctors move interstate in search of higher rates, **competition for Queensland roles can change.**

Hospitals and positions that were previously highly competitive—or difficult for some locum psychiatrists to access—may become more achievable.

So before ruling Queensland out based on the daily rate alone, it's worth understanding what the changing market could mean for you.



### B45 POLICY

Sets the framework for locum engagements, including maximum daily rates, specialist loadings and regional loadings.



### RATES SHIFTING

Rates in Queensland may be less attractive than in other states for some psychiatrists.



### DOCTORS LOOKING INTERSTATE

Some psychiatrists are choosing to work in other states in search of higher rates.



### OPPORTUNITIES EMERGE

With fewer doctors competing, previously hard-to-access hospitals and roles may now become more achievable.

## THE BIG PICTURE



CHANGING RATES



CHANGING DOCTOR BEHAVIOUR



CHANGING COMPETITION



NEW OPPORTUNITIES





# WHAT DOES B45 MEAN FOR LOCUM RATES?

Under the published Queensland Health **B45** framework,  
Senior Medical Officer locum rates can include:



BASE DAILY RATE

Up to  
**\$1,980** + GST\*



SPECIALIST  
REGISTRATION LOADING

Up to  
**+30%**



REGIONAL LOADING

**0%–30%**

The actual rate offered is negotiated and can depend on:

- ✓ Your qualifications and specialist registration
- ✓ Your experience
- ✓ The skills required by the hospital
- ✓ Location
- ✓ Length of the assignment



\* The published maximum daily rate includes relevant agency fees and on-call/recall arrangements. The amount received by an individual doctor may therefore differ.



The headline daily rate  
only tells part of the story.

## LOCATION CAN MAKE A SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE

**B45** regional loadings vary according to  
the Modified Monash Model classification  
of the location:

|  |                                    |             |
|--|------------------------------------|-------------|
|  | <b>MM1</b> — Metropolitan          | <b>0%</b>   |
|  | <b>MM2</b> — Regional Centre       | <b>1.5%</b> |
|  | <b>MM3</b> — Large Rural Town      | <b>2.5%</b> |
|  | <b>MM4</b> — Medium Rural Town     | <b>5%</b>   |
|  | <b>MM5</b> — Small Rural Town      | <b>10%</b>  |
|  | <b>MM6</b> — Remote Community      | <b>20%</b>  |
|  | <b>MM7</b> — Very Remote Community | <b>30%</b>  |

### LOOK AT THE WHOLE OPPORTUNITY



RATE

+



LOCATION

+



CONTRACT  
LENGTH

+



TRAVEL

+



ACCOMMODATION

+



ROSTER

+



HOSPITAL

+



FUTURE  
OPPORTUNITIES





# WHY COULD LOWER RATES CREATE NEW OPPORTUNITIES?



This is where the changing Queensland market becomes particularly interesting for psychiatrists. When rates change, **doctor behaviour changes too.**



Some established locum psychiatrists may decide Queensland no longer meets their preferred rate and begin looking at opportunities in other states.



That can potentially **reduce competition** for Queensland positions.



## AND THAT CAN OPEN DOORS.

A hospital or health service that was previously difficult to access may suddenly become a realistic option.

For the right psychiatrist, that could mean an opportunity to:

- ✓ Work within a hospital or health service you've wanted to experience.
- ✓ Establish yourself with a new clinical team.
- ✓ Build your Queensland locum experience and reputation.
- ✓ Develop relationships that could lead to future contracts.
- ✓ Secure longer engagements or potential extensions.
- ✓ Experience a new part of Queensland while continuing your locum career.



## Sometimes the best locum isn't simply the one with the highest daily rate.

A slightly lower rate may make sense if the role gives you access to a hospital, location or experience that strengthens your future options.



## DON'T FORGET THE TOTAL PACKAGE

Travel and accommodation can materially affect the overall value of a locum contract.



Under the published B45 framework, Queensland Health provides for **one return economy airfare** to take up an assignment.



Suitable **accommodation** is provided during the engagement.



Where suitable accommodation cannot be provided, a **rental subsidy** may be negotiated.

So when comparing Queensland with an interstate opportunity, consider the **complete contract package**, not simply the advertised daily rate.



## CAN RATES GO ABOVE THE B45 MAXIMUM?

In exceptional circumstances, yes.

The B45 framework allows a Health Service Chief Executive to authorise a locum daily rate **up to 20% above the prescribed maximum** in exceptional circumstances.



Further exemptions require additional approval.



This means two seemingly similar psychiatry locums may not necessarily be offered under exactly the same conditions.

Instead of only asking:

**"Which state is paying the most?"**



Consider asking:

**"WHICH OPPORTUNITY MAKES THE MOST SENSE FOR ME RIGHT NOW?"**





# BEFORE YOU RULE OUT QUEENSLAND...

Before deciding whether a Queensland psychiatry locum is right for you, look beyond the headline daily rate.

Consider these eight questions:



## 01 — RATE

What will I actually receive?

Don't compare opportunities based only on an advertised maximum rate.



## 02 — LOADINGS

Which specialist and regional loadings apply?

Your registration and location can materially change the overall rate.



## 03 — ROSTER

What are the on-call and recall requirements?

Understand exactly what is expected during the engagement.



## 04 — TRAVEL

What's included and what's reimbursed?

Factor travel into the complete value of the contract.



## 05 — ACCOMMODATION

Is accommodation provided, or is a subsidy available?

This can significantly affect the financial value of a longer locum.



## 06 — CONTRACT

How long is the engagement—and is an extension possible?

Psychiatry locums can often involve longer blocks, making contract length particularly important.



## 07 — HOSPITAL

Is this somewhere I'd like to establish myself?

The value of a role can extend beyond the initial contract.



## 08 — WHAT COMES NEXT?

Could this contract create future opportunities?

A successful placement can potentially lead to extensions, repeat contracts and relationships with new hospitals.



THE QUESTION ISN'T JUST:  
"WHAT'S THE DAILY RATE?"  
IT'S:  
"WHAT'S THE TOTAL VALUE  
OF THIS OPPORTUNITY?"





# DON'T JUST FOLLOW THE HIGHEST RATE. UNDERSTAND THE MARKET.



Queensland won't be the right choice for every psychiatrist.



For some doctors, interstate opportunities may currently make more financial sense.



For others, the changing Queensland market could provide an opportunity to access **hospitals, locations and contracts that were previously much harder to secure.**

**Sometimes accepting a role isn't simply about maximising today's daily rate.**

It can also be about:

- ✓ Getting into a hospital you've wanted to work with.
- ✓ Building relationships with a new health service.
- ✓ Creating opportunities for future contracts or extensions.
- ✓ Gaining experience in a different clinical environment.
- ✓ Finding a longer locum that better suits your lifestyle and availability.



## THERE ISN'T ONE RIGHT ANSWER FOR EVERY PSYCHIATRIST.

Your experience, availability, preferred locations, financial expectations and longer-term locum plans all matter. That's why understanding the **market behind the rate** is so important.



## WONDERING WHETHER QUEENSLAND STILL MAKES SENSE FOR YOU?



**Olga** has specialised in **Psychiatry recruitment for more than 12 years** and works with psychiatrists and hospitals across **Australia.**

She can help you understand:



What's currently happening in the psychiatry locum market.



How Queensland opportunities compare with interstate roles.



Which hospitals and locations may currently be worth considering.



What opportunities may suit your individual circumstances and locum goals.



**TALK TO OLGA ABOUT YOUR NEXT PSYCHIATRY LOCUM**  
CC Medical | Healthcare Recruitment Experts



### Important Information

This guide provides general market information only and should not be relied upon as financial, legal, taxation or employment advice. Locum rates, loadings, travel arrangements, accommodation and contract conditions vary between engagements and may change. Always confirm the current terms and conditions of an assignment before accepting a position.

**Source:** Queensland Health, *Contracted locum medical practitioners — Arrangements and conditions*, Human Resources Policy B45.

