Pain Medicine Specialists – Practise in Australia

Able Medico · Information for overseas-trained pain medicine specialists · November 2026

Overview

The Faculty of Pain Medicine (FPM) of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA) assesses overseas-trained pain medicine specialists. Pain medicine is on the acute-shortage list, so a section 19AB exemption can allow you to bill Medicare in any location.

Able Medico has ongoing roles with Pain Specialists Australia.

Pain medicine in Australia

Pain medicine specialists assess and manage acute, chronic and cancer pain. They come from a range of base specialties, including anaesthesia, rehabilitation medicine, psychiatry and general practice, and work within multidisciplinary teams of physiotherapists, psychologists and nurses.

What Australian pain medicine specialists do

- Assess and manage chronic non-cancer pain using a biopsychosocial approach
- Perform interventional procedures such as nerve blocks, radiofrequency ablation and neuromodulation
- Manage cancer pain and complex pain in hospital inpatients
- Rationalise opioid and other medication use
- Lead multidisciplinary pain programs

Where they work

Public hospital pain services, private pain clinics and day hospitals, and regional outreach services.

About FPM assessment

ANZCA, through the FPM, is accredited by the Australian Medical Council to assess overseas-trained pain medicine specialists on behalf of the Medical Board of Australia. The FPM assesses comparability and sets requirements. It does not grant registration, find you a position, arrange visas or set salaries — that is where Able Medico helps.

Your pathways

There are two routes for pain medicine specialists. Our Due Diligence report tells you which fits your training and experience.

Pathway	Who it is for	Possible outcomes	What follows	Leads to
FPM specialist assessment	Pain medicine specialists who have completed specialist pain medicine training and are recognised as specialists in their country of training	Substantially / partially / not comparable, after a document review and interview	A period of clinical practice assessment in pain medicine, with a performance assessment. Partially comparable specialists may also need further training in an FPM-accredited unit	Specialist registration and FFPMANZCA

Pathway	Who it is for	Possible outcomes	What follows	Leads to
Area of Need	Pain medicine specialists selected by an employer for a position the state or territory has declared an Area of Need	Suitable / not suitable for the position	Practise in that position under supervision, alongside specialist assessment	Registration tied to that position, while you complete specialist recognition

Points to know

- Your clinical practice assessment must be in pain medicine, in a position that gives you an appropriate level of independent practice.
- Your requirements are set out in the FPM's outcome report.
- Not comparable applicants may consider the FPM training program.

Medical licencing process

1. **Due Diligence.** Our opinion on your most likely FPM outcome, your registration pathway and visa options.
2. **Primary source verification.** Verify your medical and specialist qualifications through the Australian Medical Council.
3. **FPM assessment.** Application, document review, then interview.
4. **Find your position.** We introduce you to pain services, including roles with Pain Specialists Australia. The FPM must be satisfied the position meets your requirements.
5. **Ahpra registration.** Limited (or provisional) registration while you complete your clinical practice assessment.
6. **Visa.** Skills in Demand visa (subclass 482) or a permanent residence visa.
7. **Medicare.** Provider number and section 19AB exemption (pain medicine is on the acute-shortage list).
8. **Commence practice.** Clinical practice assessment and any further training.
9. **Fellowship and specialist registration.** Complete your requirements, then FFPMANZCA and specialist registration.

Workforce, demand and remuneration

Workforce. Pain medicine is a small specialty in Australia, and access to specialist pain services is limited in many regions.

Demand. Pain medicine is on the acute-shortage list for section 19AB (as published May 2026).

Remuneration. Earnings depend on the mix of consulting and procedural work, public or private practice, location and your supervision level before specialist registration. We discuss remuneration for specific opportunities with you directly.

How Able Medico helps

Medical licencing and migration is our forte. We prepare your FPM application and interview, help you secure a suitable position, and manage Ahpra, visa and Medicare steps. We have ongoing roles with Pain Specialists Australia: ablemedico.com.au/pain-specialists.

Next steps

- **Start with Due Diligence:** ablemedico.com.au/able-medico-for-doctors
- **Contact us:** ablemedico.com.au/contact-us

Sources

- SIMG assessment process — ANZCA
- Handbook for specialist international medical graduates — ANZCA
- Specialist pathway – specialist recognition — Medical Board of Australia