

MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

**Report of the Market Supplement Review
Committee**

Dental Therapist
Second Annual Review
Final Report

October 15, 2004

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Market Supplement Program is to ensure that Saskatchewan health care employers can attract and retain the employees required to provide appropriate health care services to the people of Saskatchewan.

This program is designed to address specific skill shortages by use of a temporary market supplement to attract and/or retain qualified employees. The program is designed to ensure that temporary market supplements respond to valid labour market criteria to address recruitment/retention pressures.

OVERVIEW

The Market Supplement Review Committee (MSRC) reviewed updated documentation submitted in the annual review process regarding the market supplement for the Dental Therapist classification. The initial market supplement report was released by the Market Supplement Review Committee August 6, 2002 and implemented on October 16, 2002. The first annual review was conducted by the MSRC in October 2003. The MSRC recommended to maintain the existing market supplement at that time. This latest report is to be considered as part of the on-going review of the market supplement process for this classification as described in the SAHO/HSAS Letters of Understanding pertaining to the Market Supplement Program. This is the second annual review for the Dental Therapist classification.

There were three health regions that reported to this analysis on Dental Therapists. Dental Therapists are members of the Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan (HSAS). HSAS was invited to submit any relevant information to this review.

Role of a Dental Therapist:

Dental Therapists serve children in Saskatchewan as part of the Children's Dental Program, which mandates routine dental care for children up to sixteen years of age. Most of the provinces Dental Therapists work in northern Saskatchewan.

Qualifications:

Dental Therapists are trained at the National School of Dental Therapy in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. This is a two-year program that trains students to provide basic oral health care services including fillings, extractions, and preventative care and health promotion. Dental Therapists work with dentists to provide community-based preventive dental health programs to meet identified community needs.

Information regarding budgeted positions and vacancies is provided in the following table:

Table 1 – Dental Therapist – Budgeted and vacant positions (August 2004)

Health Regions	Number of Budgeted Positions (As of August, 2004)		Number of Vacant Budgeted Positions (As of August, 2004)		% Vacancy	
	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time
Keewatin Yatthe	5	-	1	-	20%	-
Mamawetin Churchill River	3	-	1	-	33%	-
Saskatoon	-	*1	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	8	1	2	0	25%	0%

*Saskatoon has 1 part time position shared by 2 employees.

ANALYSIS

The MSRC discussed the Labour Market Criteria as guided by the Market Supplement Program framework.

SERVICE DELIVERY IMPACTS: *(Employers were asked to provide information that addresses current service delivery impacts resulting from staff shortages, potential staff short term service delivery impacts, potential long term service delivery impacts and options for alternative service delivery models).*

Two of the three reporting health regions have reported that they are experiencing moderate service delivery issues. One of these regions has experienced a vacancy at one location which has impacted service delivery significantly.

One region reported a reduction in service hours to this service area due to budgetary restraints. Another region has changed their focus to a more preventative oriented and urgent dental care focus because there are an insufficient number of budgeted positions to meet the mandate of dental care.

VACANCY RATE ANALYSIS: *(Employers were requested to provide information about the frequency and timing of vacancy occurrences {i.e., seasonal vacancies; do the vacancies always follow an event; etc.} and to identify trends that may affect recruitment/retention efforts).*

There were two Dental Therapy vacancies reported by health regions in 2004.

One region reported that there have been several inquiries regarding the existing vacancy although to date, no hires have been made in 2004.

Table 2 – Dental Therapist – Budgeted and vacant position comparison (2002/2003/2004)

Dental Therapist Classification	Number of Budgeted Positions		Number of Vacant Budgeted Positions		% Vacancy	
	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time
2002 Totals	6	2	2	1	33%	50%
2003 Totals	8	1	-	-	0%	0%
2004 Totals	8	1	2	0	25%	0%

TURNOVER RATES: *(Employers were asked to provide local analysis of reasons for leaving and trends that may be emerging. They were also asked to provide annual turnover loss of employees to other competitor employers ratio to the existing staff complement {budgeted positions} in the given occupation.)*

Of the regions that report and track turnover, the following data is reported

- 2004 (year to date) – 0
- 2003 – 2

Turnover data reported above includes reasons such as retirements, spousal transfer, wage rates and others.

RECRUITMENT ISSUE ANALYSIS: *(Employers were asked to provide information such as length of recruitment times, training investments, licensing issues, supply and demand issues, etc., as well as information that would identify trends that may affect recruitment and/or retention efforts).*

Regions have utilized the following recruitment and retention initiatives:

- advertising (i.e. newspaper and internet),
- career fairs,
- offering a higher initial rate of pay,
- relocation assistance,
- recruitment allowance and,
- educational assistance.

One region has been actively involved with the National School of Dental Therapy in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, in regards to career days and also providing students with practicum opportunities.

SALARY MARKET CONDITIONS: *(Employers were asked to identify situations where their salary levels are lower than other employers that they would expect to recruit employees from or other employers that recruit their employees. This may be local, provincial, regional, national or international depending on the occupation group and traditional recruitment relationships. Cost of living considerations may or may not be appropriate to factor into market salary comparisons).*

The main competitors for this occupation are in Saskatchewan. It is reported that wages paid by private clinics and some aboriginal organizations are higher. Saskatchewan health regions currently pay Dental Therapists \$24.85 at the top step.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

Considering the labour market criteria under the provincial framework, the Market Supplement Review Committee concludes:

- Health Regions have experienced an increase in vacancies in the past year i.e. from zero to two full time positions, and as a result have experienced moderate service delivery issues.
- In the past two years, the total number of budgeted positions has increased from six to eight positions.
- Competitive pressures by other Saskatchewan employers such as private clinics and aboriginal organizations continue to exist.

Having reviewed the employer information and considering the labour market criteria defined by the market supplement framework, the Market Supplement Review Committee recommends:

- To maintain the current temporary market supplement for the Dental Therapist classification.

APPENDIX A

Market Supplement Consideration Request – Dental Therapist

Employer Respondents

- Keewatin Yatthe Health Region
- 2. Mamawetin Churchill River Health Region
- 3. Saskatoon Health Region