

**MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM**

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**Report of the Market Supplement Review  
Committee**

**Dental Therapist**

**October 15, 2006**

## **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 Dental Therapist classification has had annual reviews in 2003, 2004, 2005 and now 2006. The decision each time was to maintain the existing market supplement. 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.

There were three health regions that reported to this review on Dental Therapists. Dental Therapists are members of the Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan (HSAS).

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 preventative 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 2006)**

Health Regions	Number of Budgeted Positions (As of August, 2006)		Number of Vacant Budgeted Positions (As of August, 2006)		% Vacancy	
	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time
Keewatin Yatthe	4	0	1	0	25%	0
*Mamawetin Churchill River	3	0	0	0	0	0
**Saskatoon	0	1	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14.2%</b>	<b>0%</b>

\*Mamawetin Churchill River also has one temporary full time position.

\*\*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)*

Health regions reported no service delivery issues related to the recruitment and retention of Dental Therapists. Keewatin Yatthe reported an insufficient number of budgeted positions in order to deliver the required level of service.

**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).*

One region reported a vacancy due to a temporary leave of absence. The temporary vacancy was filled after approximately six months.

**Table 2 – Dental Therapist – Budgeted and Vacant Position Comparison (2002 – 2006)**

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
<b>2002 Totals</b>	6	2	2	1	33%	50%
<b>2003 Totals</b>	8	1	0	0	0%	0%
<b>2004 Totals</b>	8	1	2	0	25%	0%
<b>2005 Totals</b>	7	1	0	0	0%	0%
<b>2006 Totals</b>	7	1	1	0	14.2%	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:

- 2006 (year to date) – 1
- 2005 – 1
- 2004 – 0
- 2003 – 1

**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).*

The following recruitment and retention initiatives have been utilized:

- Advertising,
- Career fairs,
- Offering a higher initial rate of pay,
- Utilizing other classifications (i.e. Dental Assistants) to enable the Dental Assistant to perform their full scope of practice, and
- Relocation assistance.

One region continues to be 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 MSRC reports the following market conditions for Dental Therapists:

- Saskatchewan health regions – Minimum \$21.622/hour, maximum \$26.832/hour, 6 steps. Effective April 1, 2006.
- British Columbia health regions – Minimum \$26.44/hour, maximum \$32.97/hour, 6 steps. Effective 1, 2004 – March 31, 2006 (no wage increase during the course of this agreement).

Health regions have reported that aboriginal employers in northern Saskatchewan and private clinics pay more than the HSAS/SAHO collective agreement for Dental Therapists.

## **CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:**

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

- There is currently one vacancy reported by health regions.
- Health regions report no service delivery issues related to recruitment and retention issues.

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 market supplement for the Dental Therapist classification.

**APPENDIX A**

**Market Supplement Consideration Request – Dental Therapist**

Respondents

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