

MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

**Report of the Market Supplement Review
Committee**

Infection Control Practitioner

December 19, 2005

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 also 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 Infection Control Practitioner classification. The first market supplement report was released by the Market Supplement Review Committee December 19, 2002. The first annual review was conducted by the MSRC in December 2003 and the second in December 2004. The MSRC recommended in each review to maintain the existing market supplement and continue to follow the SUN level B rates of pay until the next review. 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 third annual review for the Infection Control Practitioner classification.

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

Role of an Infection Control Practitioner:

Infection Control Practitioners are responsible for effective coordination of the Infection Control program to ensure a high quality of patient care. Specifics of the job include; developing and maintaining a system of identifying and reporting infections, investigating outbreaks of infections, and, developing and maintaining infection control policies and procedures by consulting with various disciplines and departments on infection control matters.

Qualifications:

An Infection Control Practitioner must either be a Registered Nurse possessing a BScN degree, or have possession of another Bachelor's Degree in a related health discipline. Employees must have training and certification in hospital infection control.

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

Table 1- Infection Control Practitioner - Budgeted and vacant positions

Health Regions	Number of Budgeted Positions (As of Nov, 2005)		Number of Vacant Positions (As of Nov, 2005)		% Vacancy	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
Five Hills	1	1	0	0	0	0
Prairie North	0	1	0	0	0	0
Prince Albert Parkland	1	0	0	0	0	0
Regina Qu'Appelle	4	1	0	0	0	0
Saskatoon	5	0	1	0	20%	0
TOTAL:	11	3	1	0	9%	0%

ANALYSIS

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

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).*

Five health regions reported to this review. Three regions reported no service issues, one reported minor issues related to budget and one reported moderate service issues related to vacancies and/or recruitment and retention issues.

As reported in last years review, employers are aware of the importance of retaining their certified Infection Control Practitioners due to the high demand for this profession.

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 full time vacancy was reported by health regions.

The following table provides comparative information from 2002 to the current information of 2005.

Infection Control Practitioner Classification	Number of Budgeted Positions		Number of Vacant Budgeted Positions		% Vacancy	
	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time
TOTALS: 2002	6	5	0	1	0%	20%
TOTALS: 2003	8	4	1	0	12.5%	0%
TOTALS: 2004	7	4	0	0	0%	0 %
TOTALS: 2005	11	3	1	0	9%	0%

*Disclaimer: Data reported in Table 1 and above may be as a result of different employers reporting year to year.

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 track and report turnover, the following is reported:

- 2005 – 5 (3 retired, 2 moved out of province)
- 2004 – 0 (from the 2004 MSRC Report)
- 2003 – 1 (from the 2004 MSRC Report)

Discrepancies in data may be as a result of different employers reporting year to year.

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).*

Health regions again have reported that it is very difficult to recruit certified Infection Control Practitioners due to a limited supply of certified professionals. There is a limited supply of qualified professionals in this profession. Typically, employers will hire a non-certified candidate and allocate the necessary resources to train the individual candidate in order for them to become certified. Historically, one large urban employer has hired Registered Nurses and provided the necessary training however consideration is now being given to technologists with a strong background in microbiology. There is one school in Canada i.e. Centennial College in Toronto that provides the required training and certification examination. Candidates must work in the field for at least six months to one year before attending the two-week course. At the end of the two-week course, the candidate must write and pass the exam. After successful completion of the course and two years on the job, the Infection Control Practitioner must write and pass a certification exam in order to be certified. The Infection Control Practitioners must write and pass this exam every five years to remain certified.

Recruitment and retention initiatives that have been initiated by employers include offering a higher initial pay rate (one region), providing training and certification allowances (two regions), advertising (one region), and offering relocation allowances (one region).

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).

Health regions have reported that nurses belonging to the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses are the main source of competition. Therefore ensuring equity with other nursing positions is important in retaining these professionals.

The MSRC made recommendation to follow SUN level B rates in its last annual report of December 2003. As a result Infection Control Practitioners were paid \$31.27/hour effective April 2004 and \$32.70/hour effective October 2004 (top steps).

SAHO and SUN have recently reached agreement on a new collective agreement that realizes economic increases of 2.5% in each of April 2005, April 2006 and April 2007. The April 1, 2005 SUN level B rate (top step) is \$33.52/hour.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

Considering the labour market criteria under the framework, the Market Supplement Review Committee makes the following conclusions:

- There are minimal service delivery issues reported by Saskatchewan health regions for Infection Control Practitioners related to vacancies.
- Saskatchewan health regions reported one full time vacancy of Infection Control Practitioners.
- As stated in the 2004 MSRC Report, Certified Infection Control Practitioners are reported to be in short supply in Canada. Historically, urban employers have hired Registered Nurses and have provided the necessary funding provisions for training allowances and time off in order for them to become certified.

Having reviewed the information as provided by employers and considering the labour market criteria, the Market Supplement Review Committee recommends:

- To maintain the current market supplement for the Infection Control Practitioner classification and to continue to follow the SUN level B rates of pay until the next annual review.

APPENDIX A

Market Supplement Consideration Request – Infection Control Practitioner

Respondents

1. Five Hills Health Region
2. Prairie North Health Region
3. Prince Albert Parkland Health Region
4. Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region
5. Saskatoon Health Region