

MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

**Report of the Market Supplement Review
Committee**

**Occupational Therapist
Second Annual Review
Final Report**

October 15, 2004

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Saskatchewan 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 and/or retention pressures.

OVERVIEW

The Market Supplement Review Committee (MSRC) reviewed updated documentation submitted in the annual review process regarding the market supplement for the Occupational 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 Occupational Therapist classification.

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

Role of an Occupational Therapist:

Occupational Therapists work collaboratively to enhance clients/patients abilities within environments and communities in which they live and work. Using a holistic and client centered approach, they facilitate improved functional outcomes in areas of self care, productivity and leisure for persons with physical, mental, social or developmental impairments. They may also participate in research, education, evaluation and consultation.

Qualifications:

Occupational Therapists require a four year university degree in Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy (B.Sc.O.T.). In the future, this profession will be going to a Masters program. Some colleges have already started their Masters programs.

There are twelve universities in Canada that offer Occupational Therapy programs. In western Canada, there are Occupational Therapy programs at the University of British Columbia, the University of Alberta, and the University of Manitoba. There is no program in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan Health has included Occupational Therapy students as eligible for its bursary program.

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

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

Health Regions	Number of Budgeted Positions (As of August, 2004)		Number of Vacant Positions (As of August, 2004)		% Vacancy	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
Cypress	1	-	-	-	-	-
Five Hills	3	-	-	-	-	-
	1	2	-	-	-	-
	4	1	-	-	-	-
Prairie North	5	2	-	-	-	-
Prince Albert Parkland	Senior - 2 Staff - 7	-	-	-	-	-
Regina Qu'Appelle	Senior - 11 Staff - 19	Senior - 12 Staff - 1	-	-	-	-
*Saskatoon	Senior - 15 Staff - 26 Clinical Specialist - 1	Senior - 3 Staff - 15	-	Staff - 1	-	Staff - 6.6%
Sun Country	2	1	-	-	-	-
*Sunrise	5	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL:	Senior - 28 Staff - 73	Senior - 15 Staff - 22	-	Staff - 1	Senior: 0.0% Staff: 0.0%	Senior: 0.0% Staff: 4.5%
	TOTAL:101	TOTAL: 37	TOTAL: 0	TOTAL: 1	TOTAL: 0.0%	TOTAL: 2.7%

*Saskatoon and Sunrise each have 1 temporary vacancy.

ANALYSIS

The MSRC discussed the Labour Market Criteria as required 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).*

Service delivery has improved again since the MSRC Report of October 2003. Five regions reported no service delivery issues and five regions reported minor service delivery issues whereas in 2003, six regions reported little or no service delivery issues, three regions reported minor service issues and one region reported moderate issues.

Health regions continue to utilize a number of service delivery initiatives in an attempt to improve the overall service. Reported initiatives include referrals to private clinics and/or contract out (two regions), and using partnerships i.e. aboriginal partnership (one region).

Despite reductions in vacancies again this past year, four regions reported that wait lists remain an issue while two regions stated that workload has increased for the Occupational Therapists.

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).*

Vacancy rates have declined again since the last review of Occupational Therapists by the MSRC. The overall number of vacancies for all Occupational Therapist positions in the province has been reduced to zero for full time positions.

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

Occupational 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	111	32	20	2	18%	6%
2003 Totals	104	39	3	3	2.8%	7.6%
2004 Totals	101	37	0	1	0	2.7%

*Disclaimer: Data reported in Table 1 and/or Table 2 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 data is reported:

- 2004 – 8
- 2003 – 8
- 2002 – 12
- 2001 – 14

Turnover reported above includes reasons such as retirements, spousal transfer, wages, private clinics and other reasons. 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).*

The following recruitment and retention initiatives for Occupational Therapists have been reported

- utilizing other classifications i.e. Occupational Therapist Assistants (two regions),
- advertising i.e newspaper (three regions) and internet (6 regions),
- attending career fairs (seven regions),
- recruitment allowances (four regions),
- relocation assistance (four regions),
- educational assistance (seven regions),
- offering a higher initial rate of pay (four regions) and,
- offering student practicums (seven regions).

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).*

Market conditions in western Canada for Occupational Therapists are similar to 2003 conditions. However, Alberta has implemented new rates of pay for this classification in 2004. In Saskatchewan, Occupational Therapists earn \$28.10/hour at the top step working at health regions

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

- Health regions report that service delivery issues have declined since the last market supplement review of October 2003.
- Vacant full time positions have declined from 20 positions (2002), to 3 positions (2003) to 0 positions (2004).
- Regions report that the market supplement has had a positive impact on recruitment and retention initiatives.

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 Occupational Therapist classification.

APPENDIX A

Market Supplement Consideration Request – Occupational Therapists

Employer Respondents

-
2. Cypress Health Region
3. Five Hills Health Region
4. Heartland Health Region
5. Kelsey Trail Health Region
6. Prairie North Health Region
7. Prince Albert Parkland Health Region
8. Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region
9. Saskatoon Health Region
10. Sun Country Health Region
-