

MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

**Report of the Market Supplement Review
Committee**

Paramedic

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 Paramedic 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 Paramedic classification.

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

Role of a Paramedic:

Paramedics provide intervention services to those clients requiring Emergency Medical Services (EMS). These interventions have been demonstrated to be life saving and significantly impact patient comfort and outcome. Paramedics are able to provide the following:

- *Pain control through the administration of narcotics.*
- *Stabilization of severe respiratory distress.*
- *Diuresis of Congestive Heart Failure patients*
- *Full ACLS resuscitation equivalent to that performed in the Emergency Department.*
- *Twelve lead ECG interpretation*
- *Cardiac pacing*

A number of health regions in Saskatchewan have private ambulance services. This report does not include information from those employers.

Qualifications:

There are multiple levels of EMS practitioners in Saskatchewan. To apply to the Paramedic program, these practitioners must have two years experience as an EMT. The Paramedic training program consists of thirteen weeks of training.

The most comprehensive EMS practitioner in Saskatchewan is the Paramedic.

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

Table 1 – Paramedics – 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
Prairie North	1	-	-	-	-	-
Regina Qu'Appelle	31	-	7	-	22.5%	-
Sun Country	1	-	-	-	-	-
Sunrise	1	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	34	0	7	0	20.5%	0%

Note: Five Hills will be hiring a temporary Paramedic on a trial basis.

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).*

The Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region still is experiencing significant service delivery issues. Although the amount of overtime has declined in the past year, it remains a concern to the region.

Regina Qu'Appelle has also experienced a number of temporary leaves over the past year which has made the continuity of service delivery difficult at times because of the inability to recruit to temporary positions.

The other three regions reported that they are not experiencing service delivery issues at present.

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).*

The number of Paramedic vacancies at the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region has decreased from eleven full time positions in 2003 to seven full time positions in 2004. The region was successful in recruiting seven Paramedics over the past year. This region has been successful in their recruitment efforts for Paramedics at the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology.

Table 2 – Paramedics – Budgeted and vacant position comparisons (2002/2003/2004)

Paramedic 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	34	-	6	-	17.6%	0%
2003 Totals	37	-	11	-	29.7%	0%
2004 Totals	34	-	7	-	20.5%	0%

*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 (year to date) – 5
- 2003 – 4
- 2002 – 7
- 2001 – 4

Turnover reported above include reasons such as other employment (i.e. Regina Fire and Police Departments, SIAST) performance and other collective bargaining agreement reasons, retirements, and others. Discrepancies in data may be as a result of different employers reporting year to year.

Three regions reported no turnover issues during the past 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).*

One region has implemented significant recruitment practices including:

- Advertising,
- Career fairs,
- Offering higher initial rates of pay,
- Bursaries,
- Training allowances and,
- On-going communication with staff.

One region is involved as a practicum site for Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics in an attempt to recruit new graduates.

The other regions reported that they have not implemented any recruitment initiatives for this classification.

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 Paramedics are similar to 2003 conditions. However, Alberta has implemented new rates of pay for this classification in 2004. Saskatchewan health regions currently pay \$26.05/hr at the top step for Paramedics.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

- Three of the four Regions employing Paramedics report no service delivery issues. The other region is still experiencing service delivery issues.
- One health region has experienced a reduction in the number of full time vacancies from eleven in 2003 to seven in 2004 i.e. an 8.9% reduction. Provincially, there has been a 9.2% reduction in full time vacancies.
- The Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region has recruited seven Paramedics since the last report of 2003, however still experience turnover.

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 Paramedic classification.

APPENDIX A

Market Supplement Consideration Request – Paramedics

Employer Respondent

1. Prairie North Health Region
2. Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region
3. Sun Country Health Region
4. Sunrise Health Region