

MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

**Report of the Market Supplement Review
Committee**

**Perfusionist
(Annual Review)**

Final Report

October 15, 2003

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.

A market supplement will be an acceptable option only if:

- a) workplace initiatives have not addressed the skill shortage;
- b) labour market data supports a supplement; and,
- c) recruitment/retention is a problem, is affecting service delivery and is well documented.

This report deals with the Market Supplement Review Committee's analysis of the recruitment/retention pressures facing employers with respect to the Perfusionist classification.

OVERVIEW

The Market Supplement Review Committee reviewed documentation for the Perfusionist classification which was submitted for the first annual review further to the market supplement resulting from the SAHO/Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan negotiations in the fall of 2002.

Although this classification received a market supplement, this is the first full analysis and review by the Market Supplement Review Committee.

There are two Health Regions that employ Perfusionists in Saskatchewan. Perfusionists are members of the Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan (HSAS). Historically, supplements have been provided by regions to this classification in order to retain their employees.

Role of a Perfusionist:

Perfusionists work under the direction of the Cardiovascular Surgeon, and typically set up, operate and maintain the heart lung machine and related equipment. Perfusionists are essential members of the operating team. Perfusionists also participate in research projects as initiated by the Cardiovascular Department.

Qualifications:

Perfusionists must be certified by the Canadian Council of Cardiovascular Perfusionists. There are two clinical perfusion training programs in Canada i.e. The University College of the Cariboo (Kamloops, British Columbia), and The Michener Institute (Toronto, Ontario), Candidates to the program must have a two year medical diploma, plus an additional two years of clinical experience.

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

Perfusionists – Budgeted and vacant positions

Health Regions	Number of Budgeted Positions (As of August, 2003)		Number of Vacant Budgeted Positions (As of August, 2003)		% Vacancy	
	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time
Regina	4	-	0	-	-	-
Qu'Appelle						
Saskatoon	4	-	*1	-	-	-
TOTAL	8	0	0	0	0	0

* Saskatoon has made decision not to fill this vacancy at this time.

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).*

Both regions reporting to this analysis state that they have no service delivery issues related to recruitment and retention due to market pressures.

Both regions report increases in workload due to an increased number of surgeries over the past year i.e. 10% and 24% for these two employers. Perfusionists must be available on an "on-call" basis for cardiac and pediatric surgeries. Perfusionists must be available in order for these surgeries to be completed and unless they are present, surgery cannot occur. Subsequently, callback is a requirement of the position e.g. one region reports that each Perfusionist works two hundred and ten hours of overtime per year.

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 regions that employ Perfusionists report one vacant position. That region has made a decision not to fill this vacancy at the time a pediatric surgeon left the region.

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:

2002 – 1
2001 – 0

The Perfusionist who terminated in 2002 later returned to that region and is currently working casual and is available for a full time position in the event that a full time position becomes vacant and is posted. This is an unusual occurrence.

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).*

Standard recruitment and retention initiatives that have been implemented include: advertising i.e. internet, trade journals, mail outs, and attendance at career fairs. Other initiatives include: signing bonuses i.e. \$1,000 to \$5,000, relocation allowance i.e. \$2,000 to \$8,000, training assistance i.e. \$40,000 to \$50,000 (with a five year return service agreement which includes salary, tuition and living expenses while on course); and, the use of interns.

Although regions have been able to retain Perfusionists in recent years, there is concern about the risk of losing employees. Perfusionists are in large demand across North America while the supply is very limited. The expense and effort that is typically required to recruit can be very substantial while there is no guarantee of successful recruitment.

Historically, regions have provided their own wage adjustments that were negotiated locally in order to retain their employees.

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).*

Prior to the implementation of the market supplement, the wage rate (top step) for a Perfusionist was \$29.571/hr. As a result of the collective bargaining process in the fall of 2002, the wage rate increased to \$32.300/hr (effective October 16, 2002). This represents a \$2.729 per hour (or 9.2%) increase.

In Alberta, bargaining for this classification is still in progress at the time of this report.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

- Historically, this classification has received wage adjustments.
- Perfusionists received a market supplement as part of the SAHO/HSAS collective bargaining process in the fall of 2002. This is the first review of this classification by the MSRC.
- There is a limited supply and a strong demand for Perfusionists in North America. There are only two schools in Canada that graduate candidates to this profession.
- Recruitment to vacancies tends to be very time consuming, difficult and the employer's recruitment and retention investment is very costly.

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 Perfusionist classification.

APPENDIX A

Market Supplement Consideration Request – Perfusionist

Employer Respondents

1. Regina Qu'Appelle
2. Saskatoon