

**MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM**

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**Report of the Market Supplement Review  
Committee**

**Speech Language Pathologist  
(Masters and Senior levels)**

**November 1, 2006**

## **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/retention pressures.

## **OVERVIEW**

The Market Supplement Review Committee (MSRC) reviewed documentation included in the request for consideration of a market supplement for Speech Language Pathologists.

This classification was initially reviewed by the MSRC in August 2002, and through the adjudication process it was determined that the Speech Language Pathologists would not receive a market supplement. Market supplement reviews were completed in October 2003, and April 2005 when it was determined by the MSRC each time that a market supplement was not necessary.

A total of ten regions reported that they employ Speech Language Pathologists (SLP's) for the purpose of this report. HSAS requested this market supplement review in September 2006.

Role of a Speech Language Pathologist:

*Speech Language Pathologists provide their service to either pediatric and/or adult clients from acute care to the community.*

*Speech Language Pathologists diagnose communication disorders (comprehension and expression) and swallowing disorders. They plan and implement treatment in language, speech, voice and/or swallowing disorders. Speech Language Pathologists design and employ augmentative and alternative communication, and, consult regarding language stimulation, inclusion strategies and teaching adaptation for students with language impairments.*

*Speech Language Pathologists place special emphasis on pediatric and preschool clients in order to identify and correct impairments at early stages of development.*

Qualifications:

*There are six Canadian training programs. These are located at the University of British Columbia, University of Alberta, University of Western Ontario, University of Toronto, McGill University and Dalhousie University. There is no training program in Saskatchewan. Typically, students complete their internships and practicums within the province they attend university. Currently, Saskatchewan does not purchase seats in any of these training programs. There is another school at Minot State University in North Dakota where a small number of Canadians graduate.*

*Timing of hiring is crucial. The Canadian programs graduate students from May to August while, Minot State University graduate students in December. Saskatchewan employers may experience vacancies if they do not hire these grads at these times.*

*In order to increase the pool of available candidates to hire from, some regions have offered to offset the cost of maintaining American certification to their SLP's. This also allows the regions to offer externships to Canadian citizens who are completing their schooling in the U.S.A. and may return to Saskatchewan to work.*

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

**Table 1 – Speech Language Pathologist (Budgeted and Vacant Positions)**

Health Regions	Number of Budgeted Positions (As of October, 2006)		Number of Vacant Budgeted Positions (As of October, 2006)		% Vacancy	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Cypress	2	1	0	0	0	0
Five Hills	2	2	0	0	0	0
Heartland	1	0	0	0	0	0
Kelsey Trail	1	2	0	1	0	50%
Prairie North	6	0	1	0	16.6%	0
Prince Albert Parkland	3	1	0	0	0	0
Regina Qu'Appelle	14	9	0	0	0	0
Saskatoon	24	6	1	2	4.1%	33.3%
Sun Country	3	0	1	0	33.3%	0
Sunrise	2	0	1	0	50%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>14.2%</b>

**Table 2 – Speech Language Pathologist - Budgeted and Vacant Position Comparisons (2002/2003/2005/2006)**

Speech Language Pathologist Classification	Number of Reported Budgeted Positions		Number of Reported Vacant Budgeted Positions		% Vacancy	
	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time
<b>2002 Totals</b>	50	13	14	1	28%	7.7%
<b>2003 Totals</b>	53	11	7	1	13.2%	9.0%
<b>2005 Totals</b>	51	12	3	1	5.8%	8.3%
<b>2006 Totals</b>	58	21	4	3	6.8%	14.2%

\*Disclaimer: Data reported in Table 1 and/or Table 2 may vary as a result of different employers reporting year to year.

## 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).*

There were ten health regions that participated in this review. Five regions reported service delivery issues and five reported none. Of the five reporting service issues, three reported minor issues such as minor inconveniences or impact to timing of service, while one reported moderate issues such as waiting lists and one reported significant issues such as some duties not being performed.

**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).*

Health regions have reported a total of four full time vacancies.

**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:

- 2006 (Year to date) – 6 (Reasons for termination include: family reasons – 2; relocation to Alberta – 1; employment with school board – 1; retirement – 1; unknown – 1)
- 2005 – 3
- 2004 – 9 (Reasons for termination included: spouse was transferred – 2; other employment with school system/private practice – 2; retirement – 1; family reasons – 2; health reasons – 1; internal transfer – 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).*

Some health regions reported hiring more Speech Language Pathologists than their approved budget because of the number of Speech Language Pathologist candidates available.

There is not a Speech Language Pathologist program at a Saskatchewan university at present.

Regions have utilized several recruitment and retention initiatives: pay higher than initial rate of pay (1 region), advertising (5 regions), relocation expenses (5 regions), career fairs (2 regions), recruitment bonus (4 regions), training allowances (5 regions), practicums (4 regions), and hiring Speech Language Pathologist Assistants (3 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).*

The main source of competition for health regions is the Saskatchewan school boards. Some health regions report that school boards pay a higher salary.

## **CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:**

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

- Health regions reported four full time Speech Language Pathologist vacancies.
- Eight of ten health regions reported either no service delivery issues or minor service issues.
- Some regions have recruited more than their approved budgeted number of Speech Language Pathologists.

Having reviewed the employer and union information and considering the labour market criteria defined by the market supplement framework, the Market Supplement Review Committee recommends:

- That a market supplement not be implemented for the Speech Language Pathologist classification at this time.

**APPENDIX A**

**Market Supplement Consideration Request – Speech Language Pathologist**

**Employer Respondents**

Cypress  
Five Hills  
Heartland  
Kelsey Trail  
Prairie North  
Prince Albert Parkland  
Regina Qu'Appelle  
Saskatoon  
Sun Country  
Sunrise