

MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

**Report of the Market Supplement Review
Committee**

Occupational Therapist

May 27, 2009

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 Occupational Therapist classification has had annual reviews in 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and now. The Occupational Therapist increased the amount of market supplement in May 2008 through the market supplement adjudication process. This latest report is to be considered as part of the on-going review of the market supplement process for this 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).

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 (May 2009)

Health Regions	Number of Budgeted Positions (As of May, 2009)		Number of Vacant Positions (As of May, 2009)		% Vacancy	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
Cypress	2	0	0	0	0	0
Five Hills	3	0	0	0	0	0
Heartland	2	1	0	0	0	0
Kelsey Trail	6	1	0	1	0	100%
Prairie North	4	2	1	0	25%	0
Prince Albert Parkland	6	1	1	1	16.6%	100%
Regina Qu'Appelle	47	11	0	0	0	0
Saskatoon	44	33	4			
Sun Country	2	2	0	0	50%	0
Sunrise	2	1	1	0	50%	
TOTAL	118	52	7	2	5.9%	3.8%

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).*

Health regions reported minimal service delivery issues with respect to Occupational Therapists. Seven health regions reported no service delivery issues or concerns.

Two health regions reported moderate service deliver issues related to the recruitment and retention of Occupational Therapists. Some of the issues included gaps in service and some on-going wait lists.

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 seven full time vacancies and two part time vacancies.

Some health regions have reported that recruiting Occupational Therapists has not been an issue while other regions report that filling vacancies takes longer than what is normally considered acceptable.

Recruitment to vacancies is typically done in the spring of each year when new graduates are available. This means that positions that become vacant in the fall or winter may not be filled until the next spring.

Table 2 – Occupational Therapist – Budgeted and Vacant Position Comparison (2002 – 2009)

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%
2005 Totals	97	39	2	2	2%	5.1%
2006 Totals	98	46	6	4	6.1%	8.6%
2007 Totals	106	44	9	4	8.4%	9.0%
2009 Totals	118	52	7	2	5.9%	3.8%

*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:

- 2009 (year to date) – 6
- 2008 – 7
- 2007 – 9

Turnover reported above includes reasons such as family and domestic, retirements, wages, private clinics, and other reasons. Discrepancies in turnover data from previous reports 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).*

Of the regions that reported vacancies in the past, the following recruitment and retention initiatives were utilized:

- utilizing other classifications i.e. Occupational Therapist Assistants,
- advertising,
- attending career fairs,
- recruitment allowances,
- relocation assistance,

Some health regions have reported that because of the availability of Occupational Therapists, they are “over hiring”. That is, they are hiring even though they may not have vacancies.

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 MSRC reports the following market conditions for Occupational Therapists:

- Saskatchewan health regions – Minimum \$28.013/hour, maximum \$34.237/hour, 5 steps. Effective April 1, 2008.
- Alberta health regions – Minimum \$31.320/hour, maximum \$41.670/hour, 9 steps. Effective April 1, 2009.
- British Columbia health regions – Minimum \$29.900/hour, maximum \$37.290/hour, 6 steps. Effective April 1, 2009.
- Manitoba health regions – Minimum \$28.257/hour, maximum \$32.755/hour, 6 steps. Effective April 1, 2009.

The SAHO/HSAS collective agreement expired March 31, 2009.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

- Saskatchewan health regions reported either no service issues or moderate service delivery issues attributed to recruitment and retention issues for Occupational Therapists.
- Saskatchewan health regions reported seven full time and two part time vacancies.
- Some regions report hiring Occupational Therapists even though they may not have vacancies due to their availability.

Having reviewed the information as provided by employers and considering the labour market criteria, the Market Supplement Review Committee recommends maintaining the current market supplement for the Occupational Therapist classification.

APPENDIX A

Market Supplement Consideration Request – Occupational Therapists

Respondents

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