

**MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM**

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**Report of the Market Supplement Review  
Committee**

**Orthotist**

**October 16, 2005**

## 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 Orthotist classification. This classification received a market supplement as part of the SAHO/HSAS bargaining process in the fall of 2002. The first annual review was conducted by the MSRC in October 2003. In October 2004, the MSRC recommended to maintain the existing market supplement as part of its annual review. This latest report is to be considered as part of the on-going review of the market supplement process for the Orthotist classification as described in the SAHO/HSAS Letters of Understanding pertaining to the Market Supplement Program. This is the third annual review for the Orthotist classification.

There was one health region that reported to this review. Other regions use agencies such as the Saskatchewan Abilities Council and private practice for this service. Orthotists are members of the Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan (HSAS). HSAS was invited to submit any relevant information to this review.

### Role of an Orthotist:

*Orthotists help those who have physical limitations by designing, constructing and fitting orthopedic braces and supports.*

*Orthotists work closely with doctors, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and others in rehabilitation medicine. After assessing the needs of a patient, the Orthotist may fabricate the support personally, or may develop specifications for its construction by a technician. The device is then fitted and adjusted to the patient. From time to time, repairs and maintenance work must also be done.*

*Orthotists work in either rehabilitation centres or private practice.*

### Qualifications:

*Orthotists and Prosthetists are graduates of a two year course and must be certified by the Canadian Board of Certification for Prosthetists and Orthotists. After twenty two months of work experience under the guidance of a certified Orthotist or Prosthetist, graduates write the National Certification exam of the Canadian Board of Certification for Prosthetists and Orthotists.*

*In Canada, there are three schools of Orthotics and Prosthetics i.e. British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT), in Burnaby, B.C., George Brown College, in Toronto, Ontario, and College Montmorency, in Laval, Quebec. Three western provinces i.e. B.C., Alberta, and Saskatchewan, jointly fund the Orthotist and Prosthetist program at BCIT. BCIT accepts ten applications every second year to the program. Applications are accepted on a pro-rated basis from each of these three provinces.*

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

**Table 1**  
**Orthotists – Budgeted and vacant positions (August 2005)**

Health Regions	Number of Budgeted Positions (As of August, 2005)		Number of Vacant Budgeted Positions (As of August, 2005)		% Vacancy	
	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time
Regina Qu'Appelle	3	0	1	0	33%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>0%</b>

## 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 reported service delivery issues for Orthotists such as increased client wait lists and increased turnaround time for production of products.

Alternate service delivery methods that were reported included transferring out of patients and referral to private industry. The region has also utilized other technicians to assist with the work load.

**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).*

There have been on-going vacancies for the Orthotist classification in the past few years. The vacancy rate for Orthotists remains at 33% i.e. 1 of 3. As reported in the 2003 and 2004 MSRC Annual Report on Orthotists and Prosthetists, hiring to these professions is very difficult given the low number of graduates and the high demand for this profession.



**Table 2 – Orthotists – Budgeted and vacant position comparison (2002 – 2005)**

Orthotist Classification	Number of Budgeted Positions		Number of Vacant Budgeted Positions		% Vacancy	
	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time
<b>2003 Totals</b>	3	-	1	-	33%	0%
<b>2004 Totals</b>	3	-	1	-	33%	0%
<b>2005 Totals</b>	3	-	1	-	33%	0%

**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.).*

There has been no turnover in staff in 2005 (year to date). In 2004, there was no turnover. In 2003, there was 1 Orthotist who left for private practice upon successful completion of certification (after two months).

**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).*

Recruitment and retention initiatives that have been reported include:

- Advertising (i.e. internet, trade journals),
- Career fairs,
- Recruitment allowances,
- Relocation, and,
- Offering clinical internships, and
- Saskatchewan Health bursaries.

The Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region reports one Orthotist intern working at the region who is eligible to write the certification exam in 2006.

**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 Orthotists:

- Saskatchewan health regions – Minimum \$26.967/hour, maximum \$32.809/hour (current market supplement rate), 6 steps.
- Alberta health regions – Minimum \$29.29/hour, maximum \$38.99/hour, 9 steps. Effective April 1, 2005.
- British Columbia health regions – Minimum \$24.44/hour, maximum \$30.47/hour, 6 steps. Effective April 1, 2004 – March 31, 2006 (no wage increase during the course of this agreement).
- Manitoba health regions – Minimum \$25.887/hour, maximum \$34.104/hour, 8 steps. Effective April 1, 2005.

SAHO and HSAS have tentatively agreed to a new collective agreement that stipulates an economic increase on top of the current market supplement pay rate. This economic increase would place the Orthotist pay rate at \$27.822/hour (minimum) and \$33.849/hour (maximum) effective April, 2005.

## **CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:**

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

- The Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region reports that service delivery issues and vacancy issues remain the same for Orthotists as reported in previous years reviews i.e. 2003 and 2004.
- There continues to be a limited supply of Orthotists in Canada. There are only three schools in Canada that graduate candidates to this profession.
- Vacancies are difficult to recruit for.

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 Orthotist classifications. SAHO and HSAS have tentatively agreed to a new collective agreement that stipulates an economic increase to the current market supplement pay rates.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Market Supplement Consideration Request – Orthotist**

#### Respondent

1. Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region