

MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

**Report of the Market Supplement Review
Committee**

**Senior Public Health Inspector/Supervisor
Public Health Inspector**

**Final Report
December 19, 2002**

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 temporary 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 Public Health Inspectors.

OVERVIEW

The Market Supplement Review Committee (MSRC) reviewed documentation included in the request for consideration of a market supplement for Public Health Inspectors. The request for a second review by the Market Supplement Review Committee resulted from the Collective Bargaining process between SAHO and HSAS which concluded on October 16, 2002 with the Agreement being ratified November 21, 2002.

Eleven employers (see Appendix B) were identified as employing Public Health Inspectors, all of which contributed information to the analysis. A written submission and a discussion with the Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan also contributed to this report.

Role of Public Health Inspectors:

Definition from the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors: The Public Health Inspector/Environmental Health Officer (PHI/EHO) is a vital member of the public health team and delivery system. The role of the PHI/EHO includes preventing disease, promoting health and improving the environment through the use of education, consultation, inspection and monitoring techniques and, if necessary, by the enforcement of health legislation. The scope of interest covers food hygiene, insect and rodent control, communicable disease investigation, public accommodation, community care facilities, public recreational facilities, water supply and waste disposal systems, occupational health and safety and environmental pollution - air, water, soil and noise.

The following institutions provide programs of instruction which are currently approved by the Board of the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors (CIPHI):

- Ryerson Polytechnical University, Toronto, ON
- British Columbia Institute of Technology, Burnaby, BC
- Concordia University College of Alberta, Edmonton, AB
- University College of Cape Breton, Sydney, NS
- Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, Regina Saskatchewan

Recent research on each of the educational institutions has indicated the following supply of graduating students in the Environmental Health programs across Canada:

Ryerson Polytechnical University – The Ryerson Polytechnical University is the first undergraduate school in Canada to offer a degree option in Public Health. It is the largest school in Canada. The school offers a degree program in Public Health. Applicants to the program may choose to apply for admission to the 2 year Public Health option if they possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited university.

Currently, there are approximately 57 students enrolled in the first year of this 2 year optional program and, approximately 40 students in the 2nd year. The practicum experience required for certification is after the 2 years of schooling.

According to the Program Director, most students desire to stay in the Toronto area upon graduation.

British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) – BCIT offers 2 options to obtain a Bachelor of Technology (Environmental Health Program). Candidates can either enter the 4 year program with appropriate high school prerequisites or, the 2 year program with appropriate B.Sc. or Diploma of Technology.

In 2002, there have been 17 graduates from both options. Typically, there have been 2 – 3 students from Saskatchewan, although according to the Program Coordinator, the enrolment used to comprise up to a third of Saskatchewan students. Most of the enrollment is currently BC students.

The Institute predicts a shortage of PHI's well into the late part of this decade. The 2001 graduating class had a 100% hiring rate even before they graduated and wrote their national certification exams.

Concordia University College of Alberta – The College offers a 15 month Bachelor of Environmental Health program in Edmonton, Alberta that has existed for the past 7 years. This time is comprised of 12 months of school and 3 months of practicum. As with other programs in Canada, applicants must have a B.Sc. prior to entering the program.

In 2002-2003, there will be an expected 20 graduates i.e. 10 in May, and, 10 in August. The school has been attempting to increase the enrollment to meet the overwhelming demand for PHI's. Recently, graduates have been drawn to positions in Ontario. Typically, students accept positions where their practicum experience has been. The Program Coordinator claims that there are currently 3 students from Saskatchewan who wish to return here.

University College of Cape Breton – The Bachelor of Technology Program (Environmental Health) offers a 4 year degree and, a 1 year program with previous degree. The program has been offered since 1996. Mainly due to the Walkerton, Ontario incident, the program has taken on greater profile and there is pressure to increase enrollment. There have been approximately 16 graduates from the College each year. There will be approximately 20 grads within the next 2 – 3 years. The College has stated that they cannot keep up to the demand from employers.

The College is the only institution that offers this program with a distance education option.

Saskatchewan Indian Federated College – This is a new program that was just accredited in May, 2002. The College offers an accredited Public Health Inspection degree program. Earlier this year, 4 students graduated from the College. There are approximately 8 students enrolled in the program currently.

Information regarding budgeted positions and vacancies is provided in the following Table for Field - Public Health Inspectors and is as of November 1, 2002

Table 1

Regional Health Authority	Number of Budgeted Staff PHI Positions		Number of Permanent Vacant Positions		Temporary Vacancies	% Vacancy (Permanent)	
	F/T	P/T	F/T	P/T		F/T	P/T
Sun Country #1	3	1		1			100%
Prairie North #10	4						
Kelsey Trail #8	3	1					
Saskatoon #6	*13	1					
Mamawetan Churchill River #11	3						
Five Hills #2	3		1			33%	
Heartland #7	3				1		
Prince Albert Parkland #9	4						
Sunrise #5	4	1			1		
Regina Qu'Appelle #4	**12	1	1			8%	
Cypress #3	4		3			75%	
TOTAL	56	5	5	1	2	8.9%	20%

*Includes 1 Staff PHI employee currently working temporarily in a Senior PHI position.

**Includes 1 PHI Communicable Disease PHI.

Information regarding budgeted positions and vacancies is provided in the following Table for Senior Public Health Inspectors/Supervisors and is as of November 1, 2002

Table 2

Regional Health Authority	Number of Budgeted Senior/Supervisor PHI Positions		Number of Permanent Vacant Positions		Temporary Vacancies	% Vacancy (Permanent)	
	F/T	P/T	F/T	P/T		F/T	P/T
Sun Country #1	1						
Prairie North #10	1						
Kelsey Trail #8	1						
Saskatoon #6	*2						
Five Hills #2	1						
Heartland #7	1						
Prince Albert Parkland #9	1						
Sunrise #5	1						
Regina Qu'Appelle #4	*1						
Cypress #3	1						
TOTAL	11					0%	0%

*Note – Saskatoon RHA #6 and Regina RHA #4 employ Public Health Inspector Supervisors, rather than Senior Public Health Inspectors.

The competition for Public Health Inspectors (PHI's) includes the federal government, all provincial governments (health, water and resource management departments), municipal governments, tribal councils, and the private sector.

There are 56 full-time and 5 part-time field Public Health Inspector positions reported in Saskatchewan Regional Health Authorities. At the time of the survey (November 1, 2002) and as noted on page 4 – Table 1, there were 5 permanent full-time vacancies and 1 permanent part-time vacancy for a 8.9% vacancy rate for full time permanent positions. 2 temporary full-time vacancies were reported. Also, there are 11 Senior Public Health Inspector/Supervisor positions with 0 vacancies reported (See page 4 - Table 2).

In the past, members of the PHI profession have actively lobbied for more resources and higher wage rates, and the media has given substantial attention to the role of the Public Health Inspector given the unfortunate circumstances of Walkerton and North Battleford. Recent announcement by the provincial government in its introduction of the new *Tobacco Control Act* has also resulted in increased wage expectations by members of the PHI profession.

It is understood that Saskatchewan Health has recently awarded additional funding for water surveillance initiatives. In some cases the additional funding may be used to enhance budgeted positions. As a result, inconsistencies in terms of budgeted and vacant positions have arisen.

ANALYSIS

The MSRC discussed the Labour Market Criteria as guided by the Provincial 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.)*

Some employers indicated that while they currently have a full complement of PHI staff, all service needs could not be met at current levels of budgeted FTE's.

Four of 11 employers who reported in the November 1, 2002 survey, did not indicate that they currently have service delivery problems.

Some employers stated that should vacancies arise this could have significant impact to service and to public risk, and that increased liability could arise. Saskatchewan Health has raised the issue of regulatory liability and public confidence that could potentially have significant impact on the delivery of service. During a recent provincial review of the public health inspection program by government, 3 critical factors were identified; regulatory liability, public health risks and impact, and, public acceptance and confidence.

Service impacts as reported by the other 6 employers include:

- Reduced "field" services. Service delays occur (building inspections) and only high priority services are provided. The approach is to be "reactive" to situations rather than a focus on prevention.
- No expansion of current level of service. Employers indicated that other emerging issues such as bio-terrorism and/or the implementation of the provincial government's new *Tobacco Control Act* could not be addressed with current staffing and resource levels.

- Ongoing workload and work priorities are being re-examined by employers.
- Significant orientation is required for new graduates. One employer indicated that new graduates require 1 year of orientation time to be fully competent on their own.
- Overtime payments were documented as an issue by at least 2 employers, in order to provide the necessary PHI services.

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.)*

Analysis of vacancies:

The following summarizes vacancy information as experienced by the RHA's:

- 1) Sun Country RHA #1 – 1 vacancy approximately 2 ½ years ago for 6 months.
- 2) Prairie North RHA #10 – Vacancies typically are for 12 months.
- 3) Kelsey Trail RHA #8 – Typically new staff leave after 2 years experience.
- 4) Saskatoon RHA #6 – latest p/t vacancy took 3 months to fill.
Over past 5 years, employees have left accordingly; 2 to Ontario, 1 to Alberta, 2 to further education, 2 to other Sk. health regions.
- 5) MCR RHA #11 – One recent vacancy is not noted on the charts (December 2002). In 2000, 1 vacancy (employee left for higher wage at PAGC), In 1999, 1 vacancy (employee left for Ontario).
- 6) Five Hills RHA #2 – 1 current vacancy (employee left for Alberta).
- 7) Heartland RHA #7 – There have been frequent vacancies. 2 occasions for 6 months, 1 occasion for less than 6 months, and, one occasion for 1.5 years. Employees have left for different locations including Alberta.
- 8) Prince Albert Parkland #9 – 1 vacancy in 2000 for 3 months, 2 vacancies in 1999 – 1 for 3 months 1 for 1 month.
- 9) Sunrise #5 – currently have 1 temporary vacancy.
- 10) Regina Qu'Appelle RHA #4 – 5 temporary vacancies in 2002 (1 was filled). 1 temporary employee left for Ontario.
- 11) Cypress RHA #3 – current vacancies of full time positions have been for 11, 9 and 3 months.

Five of the 11 employers reported that they had no vacancies at the time of completing the input documents. Concern was expressed that finding Public Health Inspectors to provide either relief or temporary coverage was difficult and that they were also concerned about their ability to attract candidates should a vacancy arise.

Table 1 indicates that there are 56 full-time and 5 part-time field Public Health Inspector positions reported in Saskatchewan Regional Health Authorities. At the time of the survey (November 1, 2002) and as noted in Table 1, there were 5 permanent full-time vacancies and 1 permanent part-time vacancy for a 8.9% vacancy rate for permanent full time positions. 2 temporary full-time vacancies were also reported. See Appendix A and B for vacancy data at other points in time in 2002.

There are 11 Senior Public Health Inspector/Supervisor positions with 0 vacancies (page 4 – Table 2).

It was noted by 2 employers that the vacancy rate for temporary positions varies on a regular basis.

Two employers have hired retirees to help alleviate workload.

Collectively, the 5 employers reporting vacancies have a total of 5 full-time permanent, 1 part time permanent and 1 full-time temporary 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.)*

The following summarizes the turnover rates as experienced by the RHA's:

- 1) Sun Country RHA #1 – 1 vacancy approximately 2 ½ years ago.
- 2) Prairie North RHA #10 – Approximately 25 % turnover rate.
- 3) Kelsey Trail RHA #8 – Typically new staff leave after 2 years experience.
- 4) Saskatoon RHA #6 – Approximately 25% in each of last 3 years.
- 5) MCR RHA #11 – For the past 10 years, PHI's have come to work in the north as trainees and have left within two years to work in areas where there is a smaller workload and less travel is required and, higher pay.
- 6) Five Hills RHA #2 – 33% turnover in each of last 2 years.
- 7) Heartland RHA # 7 – 25% turnover in 1997, 1998 and 1999, 50% in 2000.
- 8) Prince Albert Parkland #9 – 50% turnover in 1999, 25 % in 2000, 0 % in 2001.
- 9) Sunrise #5 – no data.
- 10) Regina Qu'Appelle RHA #4 – On average have 2-3 temporary vacancies per year. Typically have 1 permanent full time vacancy per year.
- 11) Cypress RHA #3 – 2 permanent full time resignations in 2002. 1 temporary vacancy in 2001 and 2002 (unable to fill).

Nine of the 11 reporting employers have 4 (or fewer) field PHI's and one senior PHI in their employ. Only 2 employers have more than 4 field PHI's and 1 senior PHI.

No employers reported turnover rates for Senior PHI/Supervisor positions.

Although there is currently a low vacancy rate in the province, employers report that turnover is a concern. Reasons for turnover include: wage rates (as compared to Alberta); excessive and overwhelming workload; preference for and relocation to an urban center; and, retirement.

At least 5 employers have reported turnover to be at least 25% (historical) per year respectively and employers indicate that a vacancy can exist from 3 months to 1.5 years.

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.)*

There are three schools in western Canada and two schools in eastern Canada who offer the education program for PHI's. Historically, there were no schools in Saskatchewan offering a PHI program until recently. The Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (SIFC) has developed an "environment and health" program which has just recently been accredited by the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors (CIPHI).

Seven employers report that they advertise provincially and nationally in newspapers, use Internet advertising eg) CIPHI website, attend recruitment fairs and advertise at PHI schools.

Five employers stated that they have made offers, or plan to make offers, to PHI trainees in the hope of hiring and retaining them following their respective certification. 1 employer has indicated that it can no longer provide training for students due to a shortage of PHI's and the resulting lack of time to spend with them.

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.)*

Other employers within Saskatchewan, and other employers in western Canada (especially Alberta) are the largest competitors. Wages in those jurisdictions exceed those paid to PHI working in health care in Saskatchewan.

- It would appear Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario offer higher wages, narrower scope of practice and more human resources to meet the legislative demands. Alberta is considered as the key competitor for PHI's. Nationally, the federal Government, which employs PHI's in every province (i.e. Canada Food Inspection Agency), offers higher wages. First Nations/tribal council employers offer higher wages.
- Within Saskatchewan, government employers offer higher wages for the same or similar qualification(s). These include Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management (SERM) and Saskatchewan Labour (OH&S Inspector).
- SaskWater recruits individuals with qualifications that include a Water Technology Certificate. As such, wage rate comparisons to PHI positions requiring a degree are not considered relevant.

One employer states that added competition is being put on the value of the work that PHI's perform due to national incidents at Walkerton, Ontario and North Battleford.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is aware of the sensitivity of market supplements for Public Health Inspectors. In particular the Committee has been made aware of the organized and comprehensive public relations efforts, contact with Government and broad media attention that PHI members have generated. The Market Supplement Review Committee has gathered data from employers in February, May, and November 2002. The data has reflected generally low vacancy rates on a provincial basis. Careful effort has been given to regard historical turnover rates in the Committee's deliberations. Many employers have indicated turnover as a concern for the past 2 to 3 years and as a result have initiated a variety of financial incentives and pay practices in an attempt to recruit and retain Public Health Inspectors.

Employers and the Unions have identified the issue of limited resources i.e. insufficient budgeted FTE's, to complete work that has been expanding in scope, and lack of qualified candidates. Opportunities exist for Public Health Inspectors to obtain jobs in other provincial jurisdictions for higher wages as well as a narrower scope of practice and/or duties.

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

1. On a provincial basis, vacancy rates for PHI's continue to be low.
2. There is a national shortage of PHI's and insufficient number of students graduating each year from the Canadian educational institutions offering Environmental Health Programs to meet the increasing demand for public health inspectors.
3. In Saskatchewan, the scope of practice for Public Health Inspectors is very broad and wide. Other provincial jurisdictions tend to have narrower scopes of practice.

4. Regional Health Authorities have limited resources i.e. insufficient FTE's, in attempting to complete the work that has been expanding in scope. This causes prioritization of duties which may create potential risk management issues. Some recent increases in targeted funding for public health initiatives have occurred.
5. Turnover rates for most employers have been identified as a concern over the past 3 years. Although employers have been able to recruit to vacancies for the most part, retention is an issue.
6. The recent HSAS negotiations have resulted in a cumulative increase of 26.38 per cent in wage rates during the term of the agreement (Staff level).
7. Employers have used a number of financial incentives and pay practices for Public Health Inspectors in order to recruit and retain. Most employers have offered higher pay steps within the pay scale as means to attract and retain. Some employers have reclassified staff level PHI's to Senior level PHI's or offered a temporary market supplement as a recruitment and retention strategy.

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

1. That a provincial wage supplement be applied to the Public Health Inspector classifications that is consistent with the efforts of employers to attract and retain these same employees over the past 2 – 3 years. The MSRC supports this action with a view to ensure that Saskatchewan Public Health Inspectors are not only recruited but also retained by employers in a very competitive national market.
2. All parties collaborate to maximize educational opportunities to increase the number of certified Public Health Inspectors.

APPENDIX A

Table 1 - Information regarding budgeted positions and vacancies is provided in the following Table for Field - Public Health Inspectors and is as of March 1, 2002

Districts	Number of Budgeted PHI Positions		Number of Permanent Vacant Positions		Temporary Vacancies	% Vacancy (Permanent Positions only)	
	F/T	P/T	F/T	P/T		F/T	P/T
Moose Jaw/Thunder Creek	3	0	1	0	0	33%	
Prince Albert	4	0	0	0	0		
Regina	11	0	0	0	4		
South Central	3	0	0	0	0		
Battlefords	4	0	2	0	0	50%	
North Central	3	0	0	0	0		
Saskatoon	12	1	1	0	0	8.3%	
Midwest	3	0	0	0	0		
Swift Current	4	0	1	0	0	25%	
Mamawetan Churchill River	4	0	1	0	0	25%	
East Central	4	0	1	0	1	25%	
TOTAL	55	1	7	0	5	12.7%	

Table 2 - Information regarding budgeted positions and vacancies is provided in the following Table for Senior Public Health Inspectors and is as of March 1, 2002

Districts	Number of Budgeted Senior PHI Positions		Number of Permanent Vacant Positions		Temporary Vacancies	% Vacancy (Permanent Positions only)	
	F/T	P/T	F/T	P/T		F/T	P/T
Moose Jaw/Thunder Creek	1	0	0	0	0		
Prince Albert	1	0	0	0	0		
Regina	1	0	0	0	0		
South Central	1	0	0	0	0		
Battlefords	1	0	0	0	0		
North Central	1	0	0	0	0		
Saskatoon	2	0	0	0	0		
Midwest	1	0	0	0	0		
Swift Current	1	0	0	0	0		
Mamawetan Churchill River	0	0	0	0	0		
East Central	1	0	0	0	0		
TOTAL	11	0	0	0	0		

APPENDIX B

Information regarding budgeted positions and vacancies is provided in the following Table for Field - Public Health Inspectors and is as of May 27, 2002

Table 1

Districts	Number of Budgeted PHI Positions		Number of Permanent Vacant Positions		Temporary Vacancies	% Vacancy (Permanent)	
	F/T	P/T	F/T	P/T		F/T	P/T
Moose Jaw/Thunder Creek	3	0	0	0	0		
Prince Albert	4	0	0	0	0		
Regina	11	0	0	0	3		
South Central	3	0	0	0	0		
Battlefords	4	0	*0	0	0		
North Central	3	0	0	0	0		
Saskatoon	12	1	*0	0	0		
Midwest	3	0	0	0	0		
Swift Current	4	0	1	0	0	25%	
Mamawetan Churchill River	4	0	1	0	0	25%	
East Central	4	0	**0	0	1		
TOTAL	55	1	2	0	4	3.6%	

*Note: One trainee at both the Battlefords and Saskatoon Districts are not yet accredited however, expect to be this fall. **Note: One recent hire will begin work in June.

Information regarding budgeted positions and vacancies is provided in the following Table for Senior Public Health Inspectors and is as of May 27, 2002

Table 2

Districts	Number of Budgeted Senior PHI Positions		Number of Permanent Vacant Positions		Temporary Vacancies	% Vacancy (Permanent)	
	F/T	P/T	F/T	P/T		F/T	P/T
Moose Jaw/Thunder Creek	1	0	0	0	0		
Prince Albert	1	0	0	0	0		
Regina	1	0	0	0	0		
South Central	1	0	0	0	0		
Battlefords	1	0	0	0	0		
North Central	1	0	0	0	0		
Saskatoon	2	0	0	0	0		
Midwest	1	0	0	0	0		
Swift Current	1	0	0	0	0		
Mamawetan Churchill River	0	0	0	0	0		
East Central	1	0	0	0	0		
TOTAL	11	0	0	0	0		

APPENDIX C

Market Supplement Consideration Request – Public Health Inspectors

Employer Respondents

1. Sun Country RHA #1
2. Prairie North RHA #10
3. Kelsey Trail #8
4. Saskatoon RHA #6
5. Mamawetan Churchill River RHA #11
6. Five Hills RHA #2
7. Heartland RHA #7
8. Prince Albert Parkland RHA #9
9. Sunrise RHA #5
10. Regina Qu'Appelle RHA #4
11. Cypress RHA #3