

MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

**Report of the Market Supplement Review
Committee**

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

Final Report

April 29, 2005

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. Another review on this classification was completed in October 2003 when it was again determined by the MSRC 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 March 2005.

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 April, 2005)		Number of Vacant Budgeted Positions (As of April, 2005)		% Vacancy	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Cypress	2	1	-	-	-	-
*Five Hills	2	2	-	-	-	-
Heartland	Senior – 1	-	-	-	-	-
**Kelsey Trail	2	1	-	-	-	-
Prairie North	5	-	2	-	40%	-
Prince Albert Parkland	Senior – 1 2	1	-	1	-	100%
Regina Qu'Appelle	12	1	-	-	-	-
***Saskatoon	Senior – 3 16	6	-	-	-	-
****Sun Country	3	-	1	-	33%	-
Sunrise	2	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	51	12	3	1	5.8%	8.3%

*Five Hills has 1 temporary part-time vacancy until September 2005.

**Kelsey Trail has 1 temporary part time vacancy.

***Saskatoon has 2 temporary SLP positions that are filled as well as 3 casual positions.

****Sun Country has 3 full time positions, 1 is vacant. Also 1 full time position is currently filled as a part time.

Table 2 – Speech Language Pathologist - Budgeted and Vacant Position Comparisons (2002/2003/2004)

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
2002 Totals	50	13	14	1	28%	7.7%
	53	11	7	1	13.2%	9.0%
2005 Totals	51	12	3	1	5.8%	8.3%

*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. Four regions reported service delivery issues while six reported none. Of the four reporting service issues, two reported minor issues such as minor inconveniences or impact to timing of service, while two reported moderate issues such as waiting lists and some duties not being performed. The two regions that reported moderate service issues have also reported vacancies.

The other regions (including those with minor service issues) have reported that any service issues that they have experienced are not the result of an inability to recruit, but rather having a sufficient number of budgeted positions to meet the demand for the service.

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).*

Two of ten health regions have reported full time vacancies and one region reported a part time vacancy. The provincial vacancy rate for full time positions is 5.8% i.e. 3 of 51 positions and for part time positions is 8.3 % i.e. 1 of 12 positions. Since the last review of October 2003, the full time vacancy rate has decreased by 7.4% while the part time vacancy rate has decreased slightly by 0.7%.

Some regions have reported that unlike previous years, they now have resumes from qualified Speech Language Pathologists in their recruitment files.

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:

- 2005 (year to date) – 1 (Spouse was transferred)
- 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)
- 2003 – 5 (Reasons for termination included: transfer to another region – 1; other employment with school system/private practice – 2; Unknown – 2)

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).*

Regions have reported utilizing various initiatives to recruit and retain Speech Language Pathologists. As with many other classifications that can be difficult to recruit to, regions have

attempted to recruit Speech Language Pathologists even though they may not have had, or currently have vacant positions.

At least two regions have reported that they have received resumes from interested Speech Language Pathologists even though there are no vacancies at present.

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

Regions have utilized several recruitment and retention initiatives: advertising (8 regions), relocation expenses (7 regions), partnerships (1 region), career fairs (6 regions), recruitment bonus (4 regions), training allowances (6 regions), practicums (5 regions), and hiring Speech Language Pathologist Assistants (2 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. School Boards typically pay a higher level of salary than Saskatchewan health regions.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

- Since the last MSRC review on this classification i.e. November 2003, there has been a 7.4% reduction in full time vacancies. Since the first review in 2002 there has been 22.2% reduction in full time vacancies.
- Eight of ten health regions reported either no service delivery issues or minor service issues.
- Two of ten health regions reported on going vacancies. The other eight health regions have not experienced recruiting or retention issues concerning 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