

MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

**Report of the Market Supplement Review
Committee**

Occupational Therapist

March 1, 2017

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 on August 6, 2002, and implemented on October 16, 2002. The market supplement for the Occupational Therapist classification was last increased in May 2008, through the market supplement adjudication process.

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 Masters degree in Science in Occupational Therapy.

There are 12 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 (Degree and Senior Level) – Budgeted and Vacant Positions (February 2017)

Health Regions	Number of Budgeted Positions (As of February 2017)		Number of Vacant Positions (As of February 2017)		% Vacancy	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full- Time	Part- Time
Cypress	3	0	0	0	0	0
Five Hills	6	1	0	0	0	0
Kelsey Trail	4	2	0	0	0	0
Mamawetan Churchill River	1	0	1	0	100%	0
Prairie North	12	1	0	1	0	100%
Prince Albert Parkland	10	1	0	0	0	0
Regina Qu'Appelle	36	15	0	0	0	0
Saskatoon	69	38	1	0	0	1%
Sun Country	5	1	2	0	40%	0
Sunrise	10	0	1	0	10%	0
TOTAL	156	59	5	1	7.8%	.6%

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.)*

Four health regions reported no service delivery issues related to recruitment and retention, while six experienced minor to moderate issues. Three indicated that recruiting to temporary positions is challenging. One region has not been successful in recruiting to its vacancy. It also reported experiencing difficulties retaining staff in this classification for an extended period of time.

Several regions reported that the demand for service can exceed the availability of budgeted resources, and any vacancy can result in disruption to service. As well, some reported using other classifications, where appropriate and possible, to assist in the delivery of 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.)*

Health regions reported four full-time vacancies and one part-time vacancy. Some regions with vacancies reported there were occasions when patients were referred to private service providers in order to meet demands and lessen wait times. A vacancy in one region has resulted in services being provided on a contractual basis.

Table 2 – Occupational Therapist – Budgeted and Vacant Position Comparison (2002 – 2017)

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%
2010 Totals	127	66	7	8	5.5%	12.1%
2011 Totals	135	53	10	9	7.4%	16.9%
2012 Totals	121	47	4	1	3.3%	2.1%
2013 Totals	150	44	5	1	3.3%	2.2%
2014 Totals	159	41	4	1	2.5%	2.4%
2015 Totals	169	55	17	4	10%	7%
2016 Totals	168	55	4	2	2.4%	3.6%
2017 Totals	156	59	5	1	7.8%	.6%

*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:

- Last 12 months – 9 (5 family/domestic reasons; 3 other employment; 1 other reason).
- Previous 12 months – 9 (6 other employment; 2 other reasons; 1 family/domestic reasons).

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.)*

Most regions reported recruiting challenges related to filling temporary positions.

Regions reported undertaking the following on-going recruitment and retention initiatives:

- advertising;
- attending career fairs;
- recruitment and relocation incentives;
- educational allowances;

- summer jobs for students interested in occupational therapist careers;
- offering Occupational Therapist student placements, and internships for new graduates; and
- pre-emptive hiring of new graduates, wherein they are absorbed into regular staffing through temporary positions.

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 (Degree):

- Saskatchewan health regions – minimum \$33.558/hour, maximum \$41.034/hour; five steps. Effective April 1, 2016.
- Alberta health regions – minimum \$37.30, maximum \$49.65/hour; nine steps. Effective April 1, 2016.
- British Columbia health regions – minimum \$31.41, maximum \$39.17; six steps. Effective April 1, 2016.
- Manitoba health regions – minimum \$32.637, maximum \$37.832; six steps. Effective April 1, 2016.

The SAHO/HSAS collective agreement will expire on March 31, 2018.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

- The majority of health regions reported either no service delivery issues, or moderate to minor issues related to recruitment and retention challenges.
- Saskatchewan health regions reported five full-time vacancies and one part-time vacancy.
- Health regions report that recruiting challenges are primarily related to staffing temporary positions.

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. Kelsey Trail Health Region
4. Mamawetan Churchill River
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