

MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

**Report of the Market Supplement Review
Committee**

Dental Therapist

FINAL

October 22, 2019

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Market Supplement Program is to ensure that the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) 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 Dental 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 Dental Therapist classification has had annual reviews since 2003. The decision each time was to maintain the existing market supplement. This latest report is to be considered as part of the on-going review of the market supplement process for this classification, as described in the SAHO/HSAS Letters of Understanding pertaining to the Market Supplement Program.

There were four areas that reported to this review on Dental Therapists. Dental Therapists are members of the Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan (HSAS).

Role of a Dental Therapist:

Dental Therapists serve children in Saskatchewan as part of the Children's Dental Program, which mandates routine dental care for children up to sixteen years of age. Most of the province's Dental Therapists work in northern Saskatchewan.

Qualifications:

Currently, there is no training program for Dental Therapists. In the past, the National School of Dental Therapy trained Dental Therapists. Dental Therapists work with dentists to provide community-based preventative dental health programs to meet identified community needs.

ANALYSIS

The MSRC discussed the Labour Market Criteria as guided by the Market Supplement Program framework.

SERVICE DELIVERY IMPACTS: *(Respondents 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.)*

Respondents reported either varying service delivery impact from none with one area reporting significant issues related to recruitment and retention. They employ a number of alternative service delivery models, including contracting out some services, and referring clients to the private sector. Some also utilize Dental Health Educators and Dental Assistants in the delivery of this service.

VACANCY RATE ANALYSIS: *(Respondents 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.)*

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

Dental Therapist – Budgeted and Vacant Positions

Number of Budgeted Positions (As of October 2019)		Number of Vacant Positions (As of October 2019)		% Vacancy	
Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
13	2	4	0	30.0%	0%

One of the full time vacancies is for a one year maternity leave.

TURNOVER RATES: *(Respondents were asked to provide local analysis of reasons for leaving and trends that may be emerging. They were also asked to provide annual turnover ratio {loss of employees to other competitor employers} to the existing staff complement {budgeted positions} in the given occupation.)*

The following turnover is reported:

- Last 12 months – 2 (1 retirement; 1 other reason).
- Previous 12 months – 2 (1 not specified; 1 other reason).

There don't appear to be any retention issues being caused by the current wage rate. Turnover that has occurred has not been linked to wages.

RECRUITMENT ISSUE ANALYSIS: *(Respondents were asked to provide information such as length of recruitment time; 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.)*

Respondents reported their recruitment/retention efforts include providing northern benefits; and offering relocation and tuition/educational incentives (with return for service agreements).

One northern area experiences a high demand for services, but faces some recruitment and retention challenges, with an average recruiting time of two years.

Currently there is no training program for this occupation, and the pool of qualified candidates is decreasing.

SALARY MARKET CONDITIONS: *(Respondents 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 current market conditions for Dental Therapists:

- Saskatchewan Health Authority – minimum \$30.504/hour, maximum \$37.281/hour, 5 steps. Effective April 1, 2017; new collective agreement currently being negotiated.
- British Columbia Regional Health Authorities – no job match.
- Alberta Health Services – minimum \$39.96/hour, maximum \$49.15/hour. Effective April 1, 2018 (wage opener for 2019).
- Manitoba Regional Health Authorities – minimum \$32.126/hour, maximum \$41.869/hour, 7 steps. Effective April 1, 2019.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Considering the labour market criteria under the provincial framework, the Market Supplement Review Committee concludes:

- There were three permanent full-time vacancies reported by respondents.
- Respondents reported varying service delivery impacts from none to significant.
- There was no evidence of turnover over the last 12 months that was the result of wage issues.

Having reviewed the respondents' information, and considering the labour market criteria defined by the market supplement framework, the Market Supplement Review Committee recommends maintaining the current market supplement for the Dental Therapist classification.