

MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

**Report of the Market Supplement Review
Committee**

Orthotist and Prosthetist

FINAL

December 13, 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 Orthotist and Prosthetist classifications.

These two classifications received a market supplement as part of the SAHO/HSAS bargaining process in the fall of 2002. A new market supplement was implemented in 2007, and again in 2010 and 2013. This latest report is to be considered as part of the ongoing 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 was one larger urban centre that reported to this review. Other facilities and areas in the Saskatchewan Health Authority may use agencies, such as the Saskatchewan Abilities Council, to provide service for this function. Orthotists and Prosthetists are members of the Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan (HSAS).

Role of a Prosthetist:

Prosthetists help those who have physical limitations by designing, constructing and fitting artificial limbs.

A Prosthetist works closely with doctors, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and others in rehabilitation medicine. After assessing the needs of a patient, the Prosthetist 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.

Prosthetists work in rehabilitation centres or private practice.

Qualifications:

Prosthetists are graduates of a two-year course, and must be certified by the Canadian Board of Certification for Prosthetists and Orthotists. After 22 months of work experience under the guidance of a certified Prosthetist, graduates write the National Certification exam of the Canadian Board of Certification for Prosthetists and Orthotists.

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 rehabilitation centres or private practice.

Qualifications:

Orthotists are graduates of a two-year course, and must be certified by the Canadian Board of Certification for Prosthetists and Orthotists. After 22 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.

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

**Table 1 – Orthotists/Prosthetists
Budgeted and Vacant Positions (December 2019)**

Number of Budgeted Positions (As of December 2019)		Number of Vacant Positions (As of December 2019)		% Vacancy	
Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
7	1	0	0	0%	0%

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.)*

No service delivery issues related to recruitment and retention were reported in this review.

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.)*

There were no vacancies reported for the Orthotist/Prosthetist classification. However, there is a limited supply of these professionals in North America, so recruitment is ongoing.

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 {loss of employees to other competitor employers} ratio to the existing staff complement {budgeted positions} in the given occupation.)*

The following turnover data is reported:

- Last 12 months –There has been no reported turnover.
- Previous 12 months – There was one employee who left for other employment. There was an additional employee who retired.

RECRUITMENT ISSUE ANALYSIS: *(Respondents were asked to provide information such as length of recruitment times; training investments; licensing issue;; 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 include advertising; a relocation incentive, with return for service agreement; and placements for students still in their clinical training programs.

In Canada, there are only two schools of Orthotics and Prosthetics (i.e. British Columbia Institute of Technology [BCIT] in Burnaby, B.C. and George Brown College in Toronto).

A funding agreement between the Governments of Saskatchewan and British Columbia has been withdrawn, so Saskatchewan students are no longer eligible to attend BCIT. The training program at George Brown College has a wait list in excess of 270 students each year, so there is considerable competition for Saskatchewan students. Discussions have been held with the Ministry of Advanced Education and Workforce Planning to explore training options for Saskatchewan students.

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 comparison.)*

The MSRC reports the following market conditions for Orthotists and Prosthetists. (Note: both classifications receive the same pay level.)

- Saskatchewan Health Authority – minimum \$41.456, maximum \$50.373, 5 steps. Effective April 1, 2018 (in negotiations).*
- Alberta Health Services – minimum \$40.92/hour, maximum \$54.46/hour; 9 steps. Effective April 1, 2018 (wage reopener in 2019).
- British Columbia Regional Health Authorities – minimum \$30.75/hour, maximum \$38.33/hour, 6 steps. Effective April 1, 2019.
- Manitoba Regional Health Authorities – minimum \$32.70/hour, maximum \$43.09/hour, 7 steps. Effective April 1, 2019.

**The SAHO/HSAS collective agreement expired on March 31, 2018.*

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

- There are no vacancies for the Orthotist/Prosthetist classifications, and no turnover was reported in the last year.
- Recruiting to vacancies can be difficult and time consuming, since there is a very limited supply of these professionals in North America.
- Saskatchewan's wage rates are significantly higher than the rates paid in both British Columbia and Manitoba. Rates are behind those in Alberta. Historically, employees who have left the Saskatchewan Health Authority did not appear to be leaving for wage related reasons.

Having reviewed the employer 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 Orthotist/Prosthetist classifications.