

MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

**Report of the Market Supplement Review
Committee**

Occupational Therapist

FINAL

March 1, 2020

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 also 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 eleven locations included in 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 the 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 I: Occupational Therapists (all levels) – Budgeted and Vacant Positions:

Number of Budgeted Positions 2020		Number of Vacant Positions 2020		% Vacancy	
Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
186	59	16	8	8.6%	13.56%

ANALYSIS

The MSRC discussed the Labour Market Criteria as required 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.)*

Of the eleven locations reporting for this review six reported none to moderate service delivery issues, three reported significant issues and one was critical. The critical location has only one position that has been vacant for some time.

Service delivery issues reported by locations reporting service delivery issues include impacts on an ability to provide service in community, home care, long term care and within acute. There are services to particular classes of patients – for example for autism and pediatric patients. Impacts include increased wait lists, delays in discharges or, in some cases, not able to provide service.

Some reported using staff from other communities or classifications, where appropriate and possible, to assist with service delivery.

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 16 full-time and eight part-time vacancies reported in this review, for vacancy rates of 8.6% and 12.56% respectively.

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 data is reported:

- Last 12 months – 15 (4 unknown; 4 other employment; 3 retirement: 2 other employment (wages); 1 family domestic reasons, 1 dismissal)

- Previous 12 months – 18 (8 other employment; 3 family/domestic reasons; 3 retirements; 2 other reasons; 2 not specified).

RECRUITMENT ISSUE ANALYSIS: *(Respondents 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.)*

Various respondents report the following recruitment measures. The ability to recruit varies across the province so different efforts have been required.

- external advertising;
- attending career fairs;
- advertising to students of training programs
- support for staff development
- recruitment incentives including relocation supports are available.
- offering practicums

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.)*

At the staff level the Saskatchewan Health Authority wages exceed those offered in Manitoba (by 7.81%) and are less than those offered in British Columbia (by 3.89%) and Alberta (by 18.84%).

The MSRC reports the following market conditions for Occupational Therapists (Degree) at the staff level:

- Saskatchewan Health Authority – Top step with the market supplement is \$42.17 an hour with 5 steps. Effective April 1, 2020.
- Alberta Health Services – maximum \$49.650/hour; nine steps. Effective April 1, 2019.
- British Columbia Regional Health Authorities – maximum \$43.81; six steps. Effective April 1, 2020.
- Manitoba Regional Health Authorities – maximum \$38.878/hour; six steps. Effective April 1, 2020.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- Seven respondents reported no service delivery issues to moderate issues; three reported significant issues; and one experienced what it characterized as critical issues. The respondent with critical issues has one position that is vacant.
- There were 16 full-time (8.6%) and eight (13.56%) part-time vacancies reported in this review.

- Turnover has been low and in most cases related to reasons other than wages.
- The majority respondents identify this occupation as hard to recruit with demand for occupational therapists.
- There is competition from the private sector and the education sector. But external turnover is reported as relatively low – 6 of 11 respondents reported no turnover with 15 staff identified as leaving over a 12 month period. 2 of those individuals were reported as leaving for wage or benefit reasons.

Having reviewed the information as provided by respondents, and considering the labour market criteria, the Market Supplement Review Committee recommends maintaining the current market supplement for the Occupational Therapist classification.