

MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

**Report of the Market Supplement Review
Committee**

Pharmacist

FINAL

March 1, 2022
(Annual Review Date)

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Saskatchewan 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 market supplement to attract and/or retain qualified employees. The program is designed to ensure that market supplements respond to valid labour market criteria, to address recruitment and/or retention pressures.

OVERVIEW

The Market Supplement Review Committee (MSRC) reviewed documentation submitted in the review process regarding the market supplement for the Pharmacist 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 first annual review was conducted by the MSRC in October 2003. An additional market supplement amount was implemented in April 2007. The current annual review date for this occupation was March 1, 2022.

Pharmacists are members of the Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan (HSAS).

Role of a Pharmacist:

Pharmacists are employed in hospitals and related health institutions. Their role is critical to ensuring that patients in hospitals, frequently on complicated and potentially toxic medications, receive safe and effective therapy. This practice area offers opportunities to interact with other health professionals; the potential for significant intervention in patient care; and the chance to be involved in research and education. Pharmacists who work in hospitals are effective members of the health care team, and are actively involved in upgrading their education and knowledge base. Many of them specialize in fields such as oncology, infectious disease, psychiatry, etc.

Qualifications:

In order to be licensed as a Pharmacist in Canada, candidates must obtain a Bachelor's Degree in Pharmacy from a Canadian university, and complete a national board examination through the Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada. Two years pre-pharmacy is required prior to the Degree program. Pharmacy students must also have obtained practical experience through an apprenticeship/internship program.

According to the Canadian Pharmacists Association, there are ten universities in Canada that offer a Bachelor's Degree in Pharmacy, including the University of Saskatchewan.

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

Table 1 – Pharmacists – Budgeted and Vacant Positions (March 2022)

Number of Budgeted Positions (March 2022)		Number of Vacant Positions (March 2022)		% Vacancy	
Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full- Time	Part- Time
188	54	26	3.64	13.83%	6.74%

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.)*

A total of ten respondents provided data to this annual market supplement review. Three reported experiencing no service delivery issues, three reported minor service delivery issues and four reported moderate service delivery issues related to a number of leaves of absence, and difficulty recruiting to part-time and casual relief positions. As a result, some routine duties have been impacted.

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.)*

Respondents reported 26 full-time and 3.64 part-time vacancies, for vacancy rates of 13.83% and 6.74% respectively.

It was noted that recruitment and retention efforts may be more substantial in some areas of the province, as the training and orientation period for pharmacists in this environment can be considered somewhat challenging. As well, it is often more difficult to recruit to temporary, casual and some part-time vacancies. It is also harder to recruit pharmacists with hospital experience or training which is ideal in hospital environments. Competitors are primarily private business.

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.)*

Of the locations that track and report turnover, the following is reported:

- Last 12 months = 28 (1 unknown; 3 other employment; 12 other employment-wage related; 1 other; 2 other employment-not wage related; 5 family/domestic; 3 retirement; 1 failed probation/dismissal). This is an overall rate of 11.6% and a rate of 6.2% related to other employment.
- Previous 12 months = 27 (2 other employment; 9 other employment-wage related; 3 other employment-not wage related; 5 family/domestic; 1 other; 2 retirement; 1 failed probation/dismissal; 4 other)

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.)*

The following recruitment and retention initiatives were reported:

- advertising online and in trade journals;
- offering practicums;
- hiring summer students;
- providing recruitment and retention allowances;
- providing relocation assistance;
- attending career fairs; and
- providing training allowances.

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 market conditions for Pharmacists (Degree):

- Saskatchewan Health Authority – maximum \$55.334/hour; five steps. Effective April 1, 2022.
- Alberta Health Services – maximum \$60.290; nine steps. Effective April 1, 2019.
- British Columbia Regional Health Authorities – maximum \$54.12/hour; six steps. Effective April 1, 2021.
- Manitoba Regional Health Authorities – maximum \$55.708/hour; eight steps. Effective April 1, 2021.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

- Three respondents reported experiencing no service delivery issues, three reported minor service delivery issues and four respondents reported experiencing moderate service delivery issues related to recruitment and retention.
- Wage rates for the SHA currently lead those of British Columbia and are lower than those for Alberta and Manitoba.
- This year's annual review reported 26 full-time (13.83%) and 3.64 part-time (6.64%) vacancies.
- External turnover was reported to be minor.
- Competitors are primarily private business.

Having reviewed the information as provided by respondents, and considering the labour market criteria, the Market Supplement Review Committee determine that the current market supplement for the Pharmacist classification should be **maintained**.