

**MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM**

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**Report of the Market Supplement Review  
Committee**

**Orthotist (HSAS)**

**FINAL**

**Report Due Date: December 13, 2024  
(Annual Review)**

**Report Distribution Date: December 2024**

## OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Market Supplement Program is to ensure that the Saskatchewan healthcare 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/retention pressures.

A market supplement will be an acceptable option only if:

- a) Workplace initiatives have not addressed the skill shortage;
- b) Labour market data supports a supplement; and,
- c) Recruitment/retention is a problem, is affecting service delivery, and is well documented.

## OVERVIEW

The Market Supplement Review Committee (MSRC) reviewed updated documentation submitted in the annual review process regarding the market supplement for the Orthotist classification. The first market supplement report was released by the market Supplement Review Committee in the fall of 2002.

Orthotists are members of the Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan (HSAS). HSAS and SAHO are parties to a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) with a term of April 1, 2018 – March 31, 2024. The Provincial Market Supplement Program language can be found in Letter of Understanding #12 – Provincial Market Supplement Program and Letter of Understanding #13 – Determination of Market Supplement Rates, on pages 168 and 170 of the SAHO/HSAS CBA.

Role of an Orthotist:

*Orthotists provide services by way of assessing, manufacturing and fitting orthotic appliances as prescribed by a physician.*

*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.*

Qualifications:

*Graduate of an accredited orthotics prosthetics program recognized by Orthotics, Prosthetics Canada (OPC)*

*Eligibility or current registration with Orthotics, Prosthetics Canada (OPC)*

## ANALYSIS

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

There was one larger urban centre, Regina, that reported having employees in this classification. Other facilities and areas in the Saskatchewan Health Authority may use agencies, such as the Saskatchewan Abilities Council, to provide service for this function.

**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 positions and vacancies is provided in the following table:

**Table 1 – Orthotist Positions**

| Number of Permanent Budgeted Positions<br>(As of November 2024) |           | Number of Vacant Permanent Positions<br>(As of November 2024) |           | % Vacancy |           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Full-Time                                                       | Part-Time | Full-Time                                                     | Part-Time | Full-Time | Part-Time |
| 5                                                               | 0         | 2                                                             | 0         | 40%       | 0%        |

\*currently an additional vacancy due to a maternity leave not being able to be backfilled so 60% vacancy including the temp position.

**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.)*

The current service delivery impact is characterized as significant in that the department can only provide a basic level of service, there may be significant gaps in service and service problems persist. Waitlists are extensive for individuals waiting for service.

Strategies to address service delivery impacts include:

- New referrals are reviewed and prioritized.
- Clients are referred to other vendors.
- Referral to Sask Abilities Council where appropriate.
- Acquisition of technology to assist clinicians.

**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.)*

There were no trends noted for turnover in this classification as it is such a small number of individuals providing this service and there has been no turnover in the past year.

- Last 12 months – There was no reported turnover.

**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 of individuals in this classification is categorized as significant meaning that qualified professionals are in high demand.

Recruitment initiatives to support this classification include the following:

- Working at building relationships with the Directors of the 2 schools in Canada to assist in obtaining placements for residencies.
- Collaborate with the Abilities Council on potential recruitment initiatives.
- Posting on the Canadian website.
- Offering of recruitment incentives.
- Offering of relocation incentives.
- Paying for costs associated with writing the licensing exams.
- Attendance at Career Fairs.
- Mentorship support.

**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.

**Table 2 – Orthotist – Certified Salary Market Conditions**

| Province                               | Job Title             | Effective Date | Maximum Rate of Pay (April 1, 2023) |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| British Columbia                       | Orthotist - Grade I   | April 1, 2023  | \$44.33                             |
| Alberta                                | Certified Orthotist   | April 1, 2023  | \$56.80                             |
| Saskatchewan                           | Orthotist - Certified | April 1, 2023  | \$52.774                            |
| Manitoba                               | Certified Orthotist   | April 1, 2023  | \$46.461                            |
| <b>Western Canadian Average (2023)</b> |                       |                | <b>\$50.091</b>                     |

|                               |           |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Saskatchewan Rate             | \$ 52.774 |
| Western Canadian Average      | \$ 50.091 |
| Sask compared to Average (\$) | \$ 2.68   |
| Sask compared to Average (%)  | 105.36%   |

Note: Saskatchewan rates are above the Western Canadian Average

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

- There is a 40% full time vacancy rate.
- Recruiting to vacancies is exceptionally difficult and time consuming, since there is a very limited supply of these professionals in North America. There are two training programs in Canada with none in Saskatchewan.
- Saskatchewan's wage rates are higher than the western Canadian average for both the degree and senior positions.

- It was noted that the biggest competitors would be private practice with the largest concentration of clinics in Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta.

Having reviewed the employer information and considering the labour market criteria defined by the market supplement framework, the Market Supplement Review Committee has determined that the current market supplement for the Orthotist classifications should be **maintained**.