

MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

Report of the Market Supplement Review Committee

Perfusionist

FINAL

**Report Due Date: May 17, 2025
(Annual Review)**

Report Distribution Date: June 10, 2025

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.

OVERVIEW

The Market Supplement Review Committee (MSRC) reviewed updated documentation submitted in the annual review process regarding the market supplement for the Perfusionist classification. Perfusionists received a market supplement as part of the SAHO/HSAS bargaining process in the fall of 2002. New supplements were implemented again in December 2010, September 2019 and May of 2023. The negotiated increase in May resulted in an amended annual review date of May 17.

The Saskatchewan Health Authority is the only Health Care Employer who currently employs Perfusionists. Perfusionists are currently employed in Saskatoon and Regina and 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 a Perfusionist:

Perfusionists work under the direction of the Cardiovascular Surgeon; and typically set up, operate and maintain the heart lung machine and related equipment. Perfusionists are essential members of the operating team. Perfusionists also participate in research projects as initiated by the Cardiovascular Department.

Qualifications:

Perfusionists must be certified by the Canadian Society of Cardiovascular Perfusionists. There are three clinical perfusion training programs in Canada – the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) in Burnaby, British Columbia; the Michener Institute in Toronto, Ontario; and the University of Montreal in Quebec. Candidates to these programs must have a Bachelor of Sciences Degree or higher or are practicing registered nurses or respiratory therapists.

ANALYSIS

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

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 are only two geographical areas, Regina and Saskatoon that currently employ Perfusionists. Both areas reported to the market supplement survey.

Information regarding total number of positions and vacancies is provided in the following table.

Table 1 – Perfusionist (including Senior Level) – As of May 2025

Geographical Area	Number of Budgeted Positions (As of May 2025)		Number of Vacant Positions (As of May 2025)		% Vacancy	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
Regina	4	0	3	0	75%	0%
Regina (SR)	1	0	0	0	0%	n/a
Saskatoon	4	2	1	0	25%	0%
Saskatoon (SR)	1	0	0	0	0%	n/a

Vacancies are characterized as moderate in Saskatoon meaning vacancies may be difficult to fill and may require a greater than a standard amount of time to recruit i.e. 3 to 6 months.

In Regina, vacancies are characterized as significant meaning that vacancies are difficult to fill and may be vacant for extended periods i.e. over 6 months to 1 year.

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.)*

Service delivery impacts are characterized as significant for the Regina area. This reflects that the Department can only provide a basic level of service, there may be gaps in service; service problems persist; waiting lists are prevalent and growing; and there are impacts to patient care.

Service delivery impacts for Saskatoon are characterized as moderate meaning that the department provides a level of service, some routine duties are not being performed (these duties have been prioritized); quality of service is maintained; service problems may linger as timelines to recruit or secure alternate arrangements are beyond expectation.

Strategies to address service delivery impacts include the following:

- The use of Locum Perfusionists in both Regina and Saskatoon.
- Utilization of overtime.

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.)*

Turnover for both locations was reported as following over the past 12 months:

Number of employees who retired from this classification – 1 (Saskatoon)

Number of employees who failed their probation/trial period – 0

Number of employees who left due to family/domestic reasons – 0

Number of employees who left the organizations for reasons not wage related – 0

Number of employees who left the organization for increased salary – 0

There has not been a significant amount of turnover this past year as most of the changed occurred in 2023 and the department is undertaking to actively recruit to fill current vacancies.

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.)*

There is a minimal supply of Perfusionists across North America. Only three institutions in Canada offer perfusion education BCIT (Vancouver), Michener at UHN (Toronto) and University de Montreal (French speaking only). Currently there are not enough graduates to meet demand and graduates tend to remain in the provinces in which they were trained.

Extensive efforts have gone into recruitment and retention for this classification over the past years.

- Continuous advertising nationally and abroad via professional societies, linked in and active academic institutional presentations.
- Return of service agreements for prospective students which will come to fruition in 2026.
- Work with BCIT to interview for future candidates to the program.
- Advertising through the Perfusion Association of Canada and the Canadian Society of Clinical Perfusion.
- Extensive recruitment by Human Resources through Career Fairs.
- Increased retention incentives with substantial return for service agreements.
- Relocation incentives and referral incentives.
- Increased standby rate.
- Purchasing training seats in the Perfusion program at British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) and Michener.
- Commitment by the parties to continue to meet and review the unique challenges.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

SAHO and HSAS are currently negotiating a new collective agreement as their previous agreement expired on March 31, 2024.

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 clinical Perfusionists:

Perfusionist Salary Market Conditions

Province	Job Title	Effective Date	Maximum Rate of Pay (April 1, 2023)
British Columbia	Perfusionist	April 1, 2023	\$61.36
Alberta	Cardiovascular Perfusionist I	April 1, 2023	\$60.66
Saskatchewan	Perfusionist - Certified	April 1, 2023	\$62.017
Manitoba	Perfusionist (Certified)	April 1, 2023	\$49.768
Ontario	Perfusionist - OPSEU & "the Hospital"	April 1, 2023	\$50.530
Canadian Average (2023)			\$56.867

Saskatchewan Rate (2023)	\$ 62.017
5 Province Average (2023)	\$ 56.867
Sask compared to Average (\$)	\$ 5.15
Sask compared to Average (%)	109.06%

Notes:

- Saskatchewan rates are above the average of the 5 provinces.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

- Saskatchewan rates are above all of the western provinces in addition to Ontario. Ontario was also included in the salary market considerations given that Michener is the only other school in Canada that Saskatchewan undertakes to recruit from. As such, a more national analysis was undertaken.
- There continues to be a shortage of Perfusionists across North America and cohort sizes are being increased but limitations exist with clinical practicum sites.
- Extensive recruitment and retention initiatives have recently been enhanced by the Saskatchewan Health Authority through a "Temporary Recruitment and Retention Incentive

Letter of Understanding” negotiated by SAHO in July of 2023 with an addendum added in October of 2023.

- This continues to be a hard to recruit position.

Having reviewed the information submitted by respondents and considering the labour market criteria defined by the market supplement framework, the Market Supplement Review Committee is recommending to **maintain** the current market supplement for the Perfusionist classification.