

MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

Report of the Market Supplement Review Committee

**Physical Therapist
(Degree and Senior Levels)**

FINAL

**Report Due Date: November 12, 2024
(Annual Review)**

Report Distribution Date: February 2025

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Saskatchewan Market Supplement Program is to ensure that the Saskatchewan Health Authority 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 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 Physical 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 rate of pay for Physical Therapists was increased in February 2006, September 2010, November 2013 and Nov 12, 2022. This latest report is to be considered as part of the ongoing review of the market supplement process for this classification.

Physical Therapists 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.

There were eleven (11) former Regional Health Authorities areas included in this analysis of the Physical Therapists. Physical Therapists are members of the Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan (HSAS).

Role of a Physical Therapist:

Physical Therapists (PTs) work collaboratively to enhance clients'/patients' abilities within environments and communities in which they live and work. They provide preventative, diagnostic and therapeutic services aimed at maximizing function and helping people achieve their highest quality of life through physical movement. They also provide individualized treatment of an injury or disability based on scientific knowledge; a thorough assessment of the condition; environmental factors; and lifestyle.

The major areas of client/patient programs that are supported by Physical Therapists may include neurological, musculoskeletal and cardio-respiratory. Physical Therapists assess and treat patients in a number of inpatient and outpatient settings. There are both generalist skills required, as well as highly specialized skills, dependent upon the setting and the patient group.

Qualifications:

The Physical Therapist Program at the University of Saskatchewan is a Master's level program. The University of Saskatchewan graduates approximately 40 Physical Therapists per year. Other Physical Therapy programs in western Canada are located at the University of Manitoba, the University of Alberta and the University of British Columbia.

ANALYSIS

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- Physical Therapist – Vacant Positions (November 2024)

Number of Positions		Number of Vacant Positions		% Vacancy	
Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
266	87	39	13	14.66	14.94%

Four former Regions noted there were no vacancy issues, 1 former Region indicated minor issues meaning that vacancies represent less than 10% of existing staff. One former Region indicated moderate issues meaning that they are difficult to fill and may require a greater than a standard amount of time to recruit and 5 former Regions indicated vacancies being at a critical level meaning that they are either unlikely to be filled or may be vacant for extended periods. These 5 areas were all in Rural areas of the province.

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 respondents to the survey, one former Region noted no service delivery impacts, one former Region noted minor impact meaning that some impact to timing or quality or quantity of service may inconvenience patients, 3 former Regions noted moderate impact meaning that the department provides a level of service, some routine duties are not being performed but quality of service is maintained but service problems may linger and 6 former Regions noted significant service delivery difficulty meaning that the department can only provide a basic level of service and there may be significant gaps in service and that service problems persist.

In order to assist with service delivery the follow strategies were identified:

- Coverage provided across the province in areas where they are experiencing shortages.
- Use of contract services.
- Prioritization of cases.
- Use of overtime.
- Use of other classifications where feasible.
- Referral to private services.
- Posting additional temporary positions.

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 respondents to the survey, the following information was provided.

Noticeable trends identified:

- Staff movement to larger centers like Regina, Saskatoon and Edmonton to practice in areas of specialization or interest.
- Staff moving to private practice for manageable caseloads.
- Retirements.

Number of Employees who retired from this classification – 5

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

Number of employees who left due to family/domestic reasons – 12

Number of employees who left the organization for reasons not wage related – 4

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

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.)*

One former Region indicated minor recruitment issues in that in most cases, qualified professionals can be readily found. Five respondents reported moderate recruitment issues suggesting that new graduates and qualified professionals are difficult to recruit. Educational institutions are not graduating sufficient new grads to meet the demand; four former Regions indicated significant recruitment challenges meaning that qualified professionals and new graduates are in great demand by employers who are willing to pay significant recruiting bonuses or to contract the service if required.

Typical recruiting and retention efforts were reported, including:

- Advertising internally and externally in addition to on licensing websites;
- attending career fairs/conferences, job fairs;
- providing recruitment and relocation allowances;
- offering practicums/internships and mentoring to students;

- Providing bursary incentives;
- Providing northern recruitment incentives;
- Connecting with students completing their clinical practicums;
- Assistance to find housing;
- Work schedule flexibility;
- Connecting with high-school students encouraging enrollment in the program;
- Supporting the credentialling of internationally trained PT's;

Some respondents noted it is difficult to compete with larger, urban areas when recruiting.

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 relationship. Cost of living considerations may or may not be appropriate to factor into market salary comparisons.)

The following market rates for Physical Therapists (Degree) amongst the four western provinces are reported:

Province	Job Title	Effective Date	Maximum Rate of Pay (April 1, 2023)
British Columbia	Physiotherapist - Grade I	April 1, 2023	\$50.67
Alberta	Physiotherapist I	April 1, 2023	\$51.80
Saskatchewan	Physical Therapist - Degree	April 1, 2023	\$49.255
Manitoba	Physiotherapist (Physiotherapy)	April 1, 2023	\$43.805
Western Canadian Average (2023)			\$48.883

Saskatchewan Rate (2023)	\$ 49.255
Western Canadian Average (2023)	\$ 48.883
Sask from Average (\$)	\$ 0.37
Sask compared to Average (%)	100.76%

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:

- Eleven former Regions participated in the survey.
- The vacancy rate for full time and part time is around the 14% mark.
- There was no trend noted for employees leaving for higher salary in the past year.
- Most all respondents to the survey are indicating that there are not enough graduates to meet the current demand of this service and that most continue to relocate to urban centers for work.
- The current salary is slightly above the western Canadian average.

Having reviewed the information as provided by employers, and considering the labour market criteria, the Market Supplement Review Committee has determined that the current market supplement should be **maintained**.