

MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

Report of the Market Supplement Review Committee

Perfusionist

FINAL

**Report Due Date: May 17, 2026
(Annual Review)**

Report Distribution Date: June 4, 2026

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Market Supplement Program is to ensure that the Saskatchewan health care 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:

- workplace initiatives have not addressed the skills shortage;
- labour market data supports a supplement; and,
- 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 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 required by the Market Supplement Program.

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.)*

Table 1 – Perfusionist – Vacant Permanent Positions (May 2026)

Number of Permanent Budgeted Positions		Number of Vacant Permanent Positions		% Vacancy	
Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
10	2	2	0	20%	0%

Two geographic areas, Regina and Saskatoon, currently employ Perfusionists. Overall, the full-time vacancy rate is 20%, representing a moderate level. This marks a significant improvement from last year, when the full-time vacancy rate was 40%. There are also two permanent budgeted part-time positions, both of which are currently filled.

Regina has extended conditional offers to two students graduating on June 30, 2026, and both offers have been accepted. The improvement in permanent budgeted position vacancies year over year indicates successful recruitment efforts.

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 in Saskatoon and Regina were assessed as moderate. This indicates that the departments continue to provide service, although some routine duties are not being completed. These duties have been prioritized appropriately, while the overall quality of service has been maintained; patient safety and compliance with legal standards have not been affected.

Strategies identified to address service delivery pressures include:

- The use of locum Perfusionists in both Regina and Saskatoon.
- Utilization of overtime.
- Use of a casual retiree to support scheduling and carry a full standby workload.

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 – 0

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

Number of employees who left due to family/domestic reasons – 1

Number of employees who left the organizations for reasons not wage related – 1

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

There has not been a significant amount of turnover this past year.

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 limited supply of Perfusionists across North America. In Canada, only three institutions currently offer perfusion education: BCIT in Vancouver, Michener at UHN in Toronto, and the University of Montreal, which offers training exclusively in French. At present, the number of graduates is insufficient to meet workforce demand, and graduates typically remain where they completed their training.

Saskatchewan continues to maintain access to two training seats at BCIT each year. Overall, recruitment and retention efforts have improved, with the successful recruitment of one individual from out of province and two Interprovincial Agreement (IPA) students who are scheduled to graduate in June 2026. An additional two students have been identified for 2027. It was also noted that the Ministry has removed this classification from the hard to recruit list, reflecting the success of recent recruitment efforts.

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

- Continuous advertising nationally and abroad via professional societies, LinkedIn and active academic institutional presentations.
- Return for service agreements for prospective students, which will come to fruition in 2026.
- Ministry paid inter-provincial seats.
- Work closely with BCIT on an interview process to determine which applicants will be offered the seats.
- Advertising through the Canadian Society of Clinical Perfusion website.
- Extensive recruitment by Human Resources through Career Fairs.
- \$100,000 recruitment incentive with 5 years return for service agreements.
- Relocation incentives.

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.)*

Province	Job Title	Effective Date	Maximum Rate of Pay (April 1, 2023)
British Columbia	Perfusionist	April 1, 2023	\$65.95
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)			\$57.785

Saskatchewan Rate (2023)	\$ 62.017
5 Province Average (2023)	\$ 57.785
Sask compared to Average (\$)	\$ 4.232
Sask compared to Average (%)	107.32%

*Note: Saskatchewan rates are above the average of the 5 provinces.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- The BC rates used in 2025 were based on historical wage schedules available online at the time. British Columbia has since transitioned to a Profile-Based Classification System, and as a result, the posted rates for Perfusionists effective April 1, 2023, differ from those used in 2025.
- SAHO and HSAS are currently negotiating a new collective agreement as their previous agreement expired on March 31, 2024.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Considering all the labour market criteria defined by the Market Supplement Program, the Market Supplement Review Committee makes the following conclusions:

- Full-time vacancies decreased to 20%, down from 40% the previous year while part-time vacancies remained at 0%.
- Ontario, which has been identified as a major competitor was also included in the salary market considerations given that Michener Institute is the only other school in Canada that Saskatchewan undertakes to recruit from.
- Recruitment and retention improvements could be attributed to the LOU "Temporary Recruitment and Retention Incentive Letter of Understanding" negotiated by SAHO in July of 2023 with an addendum added in October of 2023.

- Turnover data indicates that employees are primarily leaving for reasons non-wage related and due to domestic/family reasons.
- There is a national shortage of Perfusionists as there are only 3 educational institutions in Canada that offer this program.
- As a result of successful recruitment and retention efforts the Ministry has removed this classification from the hard-to-recruit list reflecting the success of recent recruitment efforts.

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