

**MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM**

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**Report of the Market Supplement Review  
Committee**

**Respiratory Therapist**

**October 15, 2006**

## OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Saskatchewan Market Supplement Program is to ensure that 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 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 Respiratory Therapist classification. The initial market supplement report was released by the Market Supplement Review Committee August 6, 2002 and implemented on October 16, 2002. The Respiratory Therapist classification has had annual reviews in 2003, 2004, 2005 and now 2006. The decision each time was to maintain the existing market supplement. This latest report is to be considered as part of the on-going review of the market supplement process for this classification as described in the SAHO/HSAS Letters of Understanding pertaining to the Market Supplement Process.

There were six health regions that reported to this review on Respiratory Therapists. Respiratory Therapists are members of the Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan (HSAS).

Role of a Respiratory Therapist:

*Respiratory Therapists are an essential part of the health care team providing such services as cardiopulmonary resuscitation ventilator management, oxygen and aerosol therapy, patient assessment and evaluation, and diagnostic services including pulmonary function testing and blood analysis.*

Qualifications:

*Respiratory Therapists must be a graduate of a Respiratory Therapy training program approved by the Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists (C.S.R.T.) and, successful completion of an exam approved by the Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists. Membership in the C.S.R.T. and the Saskatchewan Association of Respiratory Therapists (S.A.R.T.) is mandatory.*

*In Canada there are 18 accredited respiratory therapist schools that train respiratory therapists. In western Canada, there are four schools as follows: Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, Thomson Rivers University (formerly University College of the Cariboo), and the University of Manitoba – School of Medical Rehabilitation. Respiratory Therapists may require up to six months of orientation and training.*

*Saskatchewan Health provides bursary assistance to Saskatchewan respiratory therapist students.*

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

**Table 1 – Respiratory Therapist – Budgeted and vacant positions (August, 2006)**

Health Regions	Number of Budgeted Positions (As of August, 2006)		Number of Vacant Positions (As of August, 2006)		% Vacancy	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
Five Hills	1	0	0	0	0	0
*Prairie North	2	0	0	0	0	0
Prince Albert Parkland	3	0	0	0	0	0
Regina Qu'Appelle	42	0	4	0	7.1%	0
Saskatoon	25	3	5	0	20%	0
Sunrise	3	1	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>0%</b>

## ANALYSIS

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

**SERVICE DELIVERY IMPACTS:** *(Employers 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).*

There were six health regions that reported to the market supplement survey.

Of the six regions, three report minor service delivery issues, two report no issues and one reports moderate issues.

**VACANCY RATE ANALYSIS:** *(Employers 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).*

Health regions have reported a total of nine full time vacancies in the province.

**Table 2 – Respiratory Therapist - Budgeted and vacant position comparisons (2002 - 2006)**

Respiratory Therapist Classification	Number of Budgeted Positions		Number of Vacant Budgeted Positions		% Vacancy	
	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time
<b>2002 Totals</b>	60	7	16	3	27%	43%
<b>2003 Totals</b>	73	6	4	-	5.4%	0%
<b>2004 Totals</b>	72	6	3	1	4.1%	16.6%
<b>2005 Totals</b>	74	4	4	1	5.4%	25%
<b>2006 Totals</b>	76	4	9	0	11.8%	0%

\*Disclaimer: Data reported in Table 1 and/or Table 2 may be as a result of different employers reporting year to year.

**TURNOVER RATES:** *(Employers 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 regions that report and track turnover, the following data is reported:

- 2006 (year to date) – 10
- 2005 – 10
- 2004 – 5
- 2003 – 8

Employers have identified several reasons for turnover including: retirements, spousal transfer, wage rates, lack of full time employment hours, and others. Discrepancies in turnover data from previous reports may be as a result of a different number of employers reporting year to year.

**RECRUITMENT ISSUE ANALYSIS:** *(Employers 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).*

Of the regions that reported vacancies in the past, the following recruitment and retention initiatives were utilized:

- Offering higher initial pay rates (two regions),
- Increasing the number of FTE's (two regions),
- Attending career fairs (three regions),
- Relocation allowance (four regions),
- Recruitment allowance (two regions),
- Training allowances (one region),
- Implementing student practicum's (two regions),
- Changing job responsibilities (one region) and,
- Advertising (five regions).

As reported in previous MSRC reports, large health regions are continually in a recruiting mode for Respiratory Therapists.

Regina Qu'Appelle and Saskatoon Health Region continue to work with Saskatchewan Health and Alberta Learning in the delivery of a Respiratory Therapist training program. The program purchases seats at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology in Calgary for Saskatchewan

residents and allows them to perform their clinical training in Saskatchewan. The program sponsors eight Respiratory Therapists per year for the province. This program has successfully recruited students to Saskatchewan health regions each year.

**SALARY MARKET CONDITIONS:** *(Employers 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 Respiratory Therapists (Diploma):

- Saskatchewan health regions – Minimum \$23.389/hour, maximum \$29.025/hour, 6 steps. Effective April 1, 2006.
- Alberta health regions – Minimum \$27.21/hour, maximum \$34.97/hour, 9 steps. Effective April 1, 2006.
- British Columbia health regions – Minimum \$24.07/hour, maximum \$30.04/hour, 6 steps. Effective April 1, 2006.
- Manitoba health regions – Minimum \$23.667/hour, maximum \$28.258/hour, 7 steps. Effective April 1, 2005.

## **CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:**

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

- Health regions report minor service delivery issues.
- Health regions report nine vacancies out of 76 full time positions.

Having reviewed the information as provided by employers, and considering the labour market criteria, the Market Supplement Review Committee recommends:

- To maintain the current market supplement for the Respiratory Therapist classification.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Market Supplement Consideration Request – Respiratory Therapists**

#### **Respondents**

1. Five Hills Health Region
2. Prairie North Health Region
3. Prince Albert Parkland Health Region
4. Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region
5. Saskatoon Health Region
6. Sunrise Health Region