

CHAPTER XXV.—PUBLIC HEALTH AND RELATED INSTITUTIONS

CONSPECTUS

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Section 1.—Administration

In Canada public health is administered by the Dominion and Provincial Governments through their respective health departments.

The Dominion Government deals only with such public health matters as are exclusively national, or such interprovincial public health matters as cannot be controlled effectively by the provinces; thus hospitals for members and ex-members of the Armed Forces and other persons for whom treatment is a responsibility of the Department of Pensions and National Health, certain marine and immigrant hospitals and the two lazarettos for lepers are under Dominion administration. In addition, the Dominion Government makes grants to voluntary organizations that are engaged in public health work, notably: Canadian Welfare Council; Canadian National Institute for the Blind; Canadian Tuberculosis Association; Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene; Victorian Order of Nurses; Canadian Branch of the St. John Ambulance Association; Canadian Red Cross Society; Health League of Canada.

The Dominion Council of Health was created in 1919 with the object of obtaining uniform legislation and procedure in the various provinces. This body consists of the Deputy Minister of the Dominion Department of Pensions and National Health as Chairman; the chief executive officer of the provincial department or board of health of each province; together with such other persons, not exceeding five, as may be appointed by the Governor in Council to hold office for three years. Of these appointed members, four represent agriculture, labour, and urban and rural women's work, respectively; the fifth member is a scientific adviser on public health matters. The Council meets twice a year at Ottawa, when public health problems are discussed and uniform standards and legislation adopted.

In general, the administration of local public health activities and the establishment and maintenance of institutions are in the hands of the Provincial Governments, under Sect. 92 of the British North America Act, 1867. Under their control, municipalities, societies, and individuals initiate charitable and humane efforts, depending on the Government to some extent for financial aid and for competent uniform inspection of methods and standards. Important, and reflecting most clearly the benefits accruing from such work, are the provisions for medical inspection of school children. These are carried out in some cases by the district or sub-district medical health officers, and in others by public health nurses whose activities are confined to this work alone. In addition, expert advice and assistance are supplied free to children, teachers and parents. In many cases dental inspection is provided for.