

General Public Health Services.—Provincial and local governments co-operate closely in providing community public health services. The autonomy of the provinces and their social, economic and geographic diversity make for some variety in legislative provisions, in financial arrangements, and in the detailed division of functions between provincial health departments and local and voluntary agencies. Each province, however, now offers all or nearly all of a basic range of public health services which include environmental sanitation, communicable disease control, child and maternal hygiene, health education, vital statistics, public health laboratories, occupational health, dental public health and nutrition services.

Environmental Sanitation.—The control of environmental hazards to health, one of the oldest forms of public health activity, is a function of specialized environmental sanitation or public health engineering divisions in each provincial health department. Programs are concerned primarily with the maintenance of safe water supplies, supervision of sewage disposal systems, milk sanitation and control of general sanitary conditions in public areas, the most extensive sanitary facilities being located, of course, in industrial and urban centres. Provincial and municipal sanitary engineers set standards, formulate policies and regulations, and provide technical assistance to local authorities. The intensity of this type of preventive supervision and control varies from province to province and within the province, but basic programs are similar.

Occupational Health.—Services designed to prevent accidents and occupational diseases and to maintain the health of employees are the common concern of provincial health departments, labour departments, workmen's compensation boards, and industry management. Provincial agencies regulate working conditions and offer consultation and educational services to industry. All provinces have on their statute books legislation (Factory Acts, Shop Acts, Mines Acts, Workmen's Compensation Acts) setting health safety standards for employers.

Communicable Disease Control.—The control of communicable disease has been intimately connected with the beginnings and development of public health measures and concepts. Separate divisions of epidemiology or communicable disease control exist in the six larger provinces; in the Atlantic Provinces these functions are handled by a provincial medical health officer. Local health authorities undertake case-finding and diagnostic services in co-operation with public health laboratories, carry out epidemiological investigations and often participate in tuberculosis and venereal disease control measures.

Maternal and Child Health.—Services for mothers and children are largely decentralized through local units and departments, but most provinces maintain separate divisions or employ consultants to promote better standards and to give technical assistance. Public health nurses have a prominent place in this work which may include prenatal education, provisions for delivery and care of the newborn in remote areas, home visits, child health clinics and school health services.

Nutrition.—Services include technical guidance, education, consultation and research. In some provinces school lunch programs are also sponsored and dietary supplements distributed. Five provinces have special nutrition divisions; elsewhere nutritionists serve in other divisions of the health department.

Health Education.—In most provinces experience has demonstrated the need for a professional full-time "health educator" as a member of the public health team. Nine provinces have separate divisions or units to co-ordinate the dissemination of health information through all available media.

Vital and Health Statistics.—All provinces have vital statistics legislation providing for the compulsory registration of births, marriages, deaths and stillbirths. Divisions of vital statistics are located in the health department in nine provinces; Ontario has its vital statistics office in the Department of Municipal Affairs.