

In March 1960 the Minister of National Health and Welfare, in testimony before the Special Committee on Estimates of the House of Commons, announced that the amount made available under the General Public Health Grant would be increased by nearly \$5,500,000 and that under the Medical Rehabilitation Grant raised to over \$2,600,000. At the same time he announced that the Laboratory and Radiological Services and Venereal Disease Control Grants would be absorbed into the General Public Health Grant, and the Crippled Children Grant into that for Medical Rehabilitation. The Mental Health Grant would be increased by \$1,500,000 and the grants for Professional Training and Public Health Research to a total of \$1,740,000 each. At the same time the amounts available under the Tuberculosis Control, Cancer Control and Child and Maternal Health Grants would be decreased. This modification of the program was decided upon, after consultation with the provincial health departments and other agencies concerned, because projects formerly dealt with under the Laboratory and Radiological Services Grant are being increasingly included with the hospital insurance schemes and because it was believed that a more effective co-ordination with other local health programs could be achieved if venereal disease problems could be dealt with under the broader terms of reference of the General Public Health Grant. Similarly, it was believed that more flexibility could be given to rehabilitation services under the new arrangement.

Hospital Insurance.—The Hospital Insurance and Diagnostic Services Act of 1957 provides enabling legislation under which federal grants-in-aid are made available to the provinces to assist in operating publicly administered insurance plans for general hospital care. The method of financing and administering plans, as well as the types of service offered above the minimum stipulated in the Act, is a provincial matter.

Under the financial formula, the Federal Government contributes about one-half of the aggregate shareable costs of the hospital insurance plans. In the individual provinces, however, the federal share varies since each participating province receives 25 p.c. of the national per capita cost of hospital services plus 25 p.c. of its own provincial per capita cost, multiplied by the population covered.

The Act enumerates the basic range of services mandatory for any provincial scheme receiving federal support. Each participating province is required to make specified benefits universally available to its population. The total days of care provided may not be limited and must include basic public ward and other in-patient service normally associated with the operation of a hospital, together with certain diagnostic aids for in-patients and, on a permissive basis, for out-patients. Services may be provided in chronic as well as active treatment hospitals, but legislation specifically excludes care in tuberculosis sanatoria, mental hospitals and institutions for custodial care. Capital costs are also specifically excluded from shareable costs. Thus the federal Act is set up to assist in provision of an insurance system for basic general hospital services available under uniform terms and conditions to the entire provincial population. (See also the special article on Hospital Services and Hospital Insurance in Canada, pp. 281-290.)

Food and Drug Control.—The Food and Drugs, Proprietary or Patent Medicine, and Opium and Narcotic Drug Acts govern the safety, purity and quality as well as the labelling and advertising of all foods, drugs, therapeutic devices and cosmetics. Standards of safety and purity are maintained through constant and widespread inspection and laboratory research. In the central Food and Drugs laboratory, standards governing ingredients are formulated and methods of analysis developed. Special research is carried on to establish the safety of new products. Several panels of experts advise on technical and medical problems.

Regulation of the domestic supply of narcotic drugs is maintained through a system of licensed distributors and reports of all stocks subsequently sold or dispensed. Enforcement of the provisions concerning illicit traffic is carried out in collaboration with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.