



Development in the sciences related to medicine, improved health services and raised nutritional and other standards are contributing to generally favourable health conditions—to a declining death rate and a longer expectation of life. Progress against the contagious diseases emphasizes the problems presented by chronic illness and the disabilities of persons in the older age groups. Heart and hypertensive disease, arthritis and rheumatism are among the leading causes of disability, though residual disability from stroke, Parkinson's disease, epilepsy and multiple sclerosis also accounts for large numbers of disabled persons. The death rate for lung cancer continues to increase and cause controversy, and mental illness remains a major problem. Accidents, especially traffic accidents, constitute a steady and tragic problem particularly as they affect children. Also, Canada now shares the world-wide concern for the hazards of radiation from medical and industrial causes as well as from fallout.

Progress in the welfare field also continues to be substantial and efforts are concentrated on remaining problems, some of which are of considerable magnitude. Rapid urbanization, increasing numbers of older persons in the population and large-scale immigration are among the forces requiring new social approaches. On the other hand, the growth of the industrial community in Canada has been associated with a marked improvement in the general standard of living. Higher real income has permitted better levels of nutrition and better housing, and improved working conditions and shorter working hours have benefited the industrial worker. During the past decade, urban technical and health services have been extended to the rural population of the country, so that many of the improvements in the national standard of living are being shared more equally by the urban and rural populations.