

PART I.—PUBLIC HEALTH

Section 1.—Federal, Provincial and Local Health Services

Provincial governments bear the major responsibility for health services in Canada, with the municipality often assuming considerable authority over matters delegated to it by provincial legislation. The Federal Government has jurisdiction over a number of health matters of a national character and provides important financial assistance to provincial health and hospital services. All levels of government are aided and supported by a network of voluntary agencies working in different health fields.

Subsection 1.—Federal Health Activities

The Department of National Health and Welfare is the chief federal agency in health matters, but important treatment programs are also administered by the Departments of Veterans Affairs and National Defence. The Dominion Bureau of Statistics is responsible for the collection, analysis and publication of health statistics, the Medical Research Council and the Defence Research Board administer medical research programs, and the Department of Agriculture has certain health responsibilities connected with food production.

The Department of National Health and Welfare controls food and drugs, including narcotics (see pp. 242-248), operates quarantine and immigration medical services, carries out international health obligations, and provides health services to Indians, Eskimos and other special groups. It advises on the visual eligibility of applicants for blindness allowances and co-operates with the provinces in the provision of surgical or remedial treatment for recipients of the allowances. Under the Public Works Health Act, supervision of health conditions is provided for persons employed on federal public works. Other programs of health or medical supervision and counselling are provided to the federal Civil Service and to the Department of Transport in all matters pertaining to the safety, health and comfort of aircrew and passengers.

The Department serves in an advisory and co-ordinating capacity to the provinces and administers grants to provincial health and national voluntary agencies. Administration of federal aspects of the Hospital Insurance and National Health Grant Program has become a major activity during the past decade.

Co-ordination with the provinces on health matters is facilitated by the Dominion Council of Health, the principal advisory agency to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Its membership includes the Deputy Minister of National Health, who acts as chairman, the chief health officer of each province, and five appointees of the Governor in Council representing the universities, labour, agriculture and French- and English-speaking women's organizations. The Council meets semi-annually. Federal-provincial technical advisory committees of the Council deal with specific aspects of public health.

National Health Grant Program.—The National Health Grant Program, inaugurated in 1948, initially made ten federal grants available to the provinces for the development and strengthening of public health and hospital services. Nine are continuing grants: the Hospital Construction, Professional Training, General Public Health, Public Health Research, Mental Health, Tuberculosis Control, Cancer Control, Venereal Disease Control, and Crippled Children Grants. A Health Survey Grant lapsed in 1953 following completion of provincial health surveys. In 1953, after a review of the first five years of the Program, three new grants were established: Child and Maternal Health, Medical Rehabilitation, and Laboratory and Radiological Services.

In 1958, federal assistance under the Hospital Construction Grant was increased to \$2,000 per hospital bed (whether active treatment, chronic, mental or tuberculosis), double the previous grant for active treatment beds. In addition, funds were made available to meet up to one-third of the cost of approved alterations and renovations to existing facilities, with the provinces at least matching federal contributions.