

### 6.7.1 Social assistance

All provinces make legislative provision for assistance to persons in need and their dependants. All have incorporated provisions for allowances to needy mothers with dependent children in a broadened program of provincial allowances to several categories of persons with long-term need or in a general program under which the only eligibility requirement is need, irrespective of the cause of need.

In addition to allowances to cover items of basic need, such as food, clothing, shelter, fuel and utilities, all provinces make provision for such special items as rehabilitation services, expenses incidental to education or obtaining employment, counselling, homemaker services and institutional care. The provinces are reimbursed by the federal government under the Canada Assistance Plan for 50% of the costs of assistance and of certain welfare services given by the provincial and municipal authorities (Section 6.6.1). The provincial departments of welfare set rates of assistance and conditions of eligibility; they have regulatory and supervisory powers over municipal administration of assistance, and require certain standards as a condition of provincial aid. Length of residence is not a condition of aid in any province, but municipal residence may determine the financially responsible authority. The provincial authority takes responsibility for aid in unorganized areas within the province and for persons who lack municipal residence.

The administration of assistance varies. In four provinces, allowances to persons with long-term need such as needy mothers with dependent children, disabled persons and the aged, are administered by the province and other allowances are administered by the municipalities. In Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, all assistance is administered by the provincial authority. In Quebec, the province administers assistance through regional and local offices, except in the city of Montreal where the municipality administers assistance on behalf of the province. In Saskatchewan, social assistance is administered by the province except in two municipalities which elected to retain responsibility for administration of the program. In British Columbia, a comprehensive program of general assistance is administered by the local authority, i.e., by the municipalities except in sparsely populated municipalities and in areas without municipal organization where aid is administered by the province; the province also administers a program of supplementary allowances to recipients of old age security pensions, and the two categories of federal-provincial allowances. In the seven provinces where the municipalities have some administrative responsibility, the proportion of the costs of aid borne by the province varies from 40% to 100%.

### 6.7.2 Child welfare services

Child welfare services, which include child protection and care, services for unmarried parents and adoption services, are available under provincial legislation in all provinces. The programs are administered by the provincial authority or by local children's aid societies (voluntary agencies with boards of directors operating under charter and under the general supervision of provincial departments). In Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Saskatchewan and Alberta, child welfare services are administered by the province; in Quebec, they are administered by recognized voluntary agencies and institutions, religious and secular; in Ontario, a network of local children's aid societies is responsible for the services; in Nova Scotia, Manitoba and British Columbia, services are administered by local children's aid societies in the heavily populated areas and by the province elsewhere.

Children's aid societies and the recognized agencies in Quebec receive substantial provincial grants and sometimes municipal grants and in many areas they also receive support from private subscriptions or from United Appeal funds. The costs of certain services and maintenance costs for children in care of a voluntary or public agency are sharable with the federal government under the Canada Assistance Plan as described in Section 6.6.1.

Services are provided as appropriate and include services to children in their own homes, care in foster boarding homes or adoption homes or, for children who need it, in selected institutions. Institutions for children are governed by provincial child welfare legislation and are generally subject to inspection and in some provinces to licensing. Children placed for adoption may be wards or they may be placed on the written consent of the parent. Adoptions, including those arranged privately, number about 20,000 annually.

Day nurseries for the children of working mothers are operated under either voluntary or