

income relationships, food consumption patterns, dental health, and anthropometric status. National priorities for corrective action to improve nutritional status have been developed, and are beginning to take shape. These involve all parts of the national community — the federal, provincial, and local governments, industry, the health professional, educational activities, and the consumer at the community level.

Drugs. The Health Protection Branch regulates both the manufacture and distribution of drugs in Canada. The conditions under which drugs are to be manufactured are described in the Manufacturing Facilities and Control Regulations. They relate to facilities, employment of qualified personnel, quality control procedures, maintenance of records, and a suitable system to enable a complete and rapid recall of any batch of drugs from the market. Pharmaceutical plants are regularly visited by inspectors to ensure that the drugs produced meet the quality standards required for sale in Canada.

When a new drug with unknown properties is to be placed on the market, the manufacturer is required by law to provide specified information, including a quantitative list of all ingredients, evidence of clinical effectiveness, the formulation of dosage forms and reports of any adverse effects. This information is studied carefully to ensure that the drug is safe and effective for the purposes claimed. Even after a new drug is on the market, its sale can be banned by the Health Protection Branch if the Adverse-Drug-Reaction Program indicates that the drug is unsafe and injurious. The Drug Quality Assessment Program aims at producing objective evidence of the quality of drugs already on the Canadian market and disseminating it to members of the health professions, governments and the general public. Plants manufacturing biologicals such as serums and vaccines must also be licensed according to specifications of the Health Protection Branch, whether they are located in Canada or abroad.

Another major objective of the Branch is to enable the public to purchase high quality drugs at the cheapest price. This program includes integrated action involving inspection of manufacturing facilities, assessing of claims and clinical equivalency of competing brands, and providing information to professionals concerned and to the general public.

Non-medical use of drugs. The objectives of the Non-Medical Use of Drugs Directorate may be described under four main headings: prevention, to develop and stimulate programs intended to prevent mind-altering drugs being used in ways that may result in physical, mental and social health problems; treatment, to stimulate the development of effective means of dealing with the immediate physical and mental problems caused by the use of mind-altering drugs; rehabilitation, to stimulate the development of effective means of restoring casualties of mind-altering drugs to health; and education, to develop and promote information and education programs aimed at preventing drug abuse and at persuading smokers to stop and young persons not to start.

Environmental health. The Environmental Health Directorate is responsible for studying the adverse effects on health of technological and social environments. The Directorate also has a responsibility to develop health hazard assessments from exposures to air- and water-borne pollutants in the occupational, home, and general environments. Research on radiation hazards is conducted and environmental and occupational exposures are monitored. The Directorate is responsible for the enforcement of the Radiation Emitting Devices Act and that portion of the Food and Drugs Act dealing with medical devices and radioactive pharmaceuticals.

Disease control. In the area of communicable disease control the Laboratory Centre for Disease Control Directorate is involved in the development and implementation of preventive, diagnostic, quality control, and other measures directed to combat communicable disease agents. Other activities entail developing methods for detecting and preventing disease, producing and distributing standardized diagnostic agents to federal, provincial and other health organizations, and providing a national reference service for identification of disease-producing bacteria, viruses and parasites. Through the Epidemiology Division, the Branch assists in control of infectious and other diseases by disease surveillance, epidemiological studies and by providing assistance in epidemics.

5.1.3 Other health-related services

Medical research. Most federal grants supporting health science research in universities and hospitals are channelled through the Medical Research Council. The work of the Council and