

With the exception of insured hospital and medical care programs, which are administered by the Yukon and Northwest Territories governments, the Department of National Health and Welfare manages health services for all residents of the two northern territories. The services comprise all normal health department activities including a comprehensive public health program, special arrangements to facilitate inter-station communication, and the transportation of patients from isolated communities to referral medical centres. Several university groups have interests in delineated zones for the provision on a rotation basis of medical personnel and students. Their activities are supported financially through government contracts and medical care insurance. Departmental facilities include four hospitals, two nursing stations, five health stations, and three health centres in the Yukon Territory and four hospitals, 38 nursing stations, seven health stations and seven health centres in the Northwest Territories.

Under the Quarantine Act, all vessels, aircraft, and other conveyances and their crews and passengers arriving in Canada from foreign countries are subject to inspection by quarantine officers to detect and correct conditions that could lead to the entry into Canada of such diseases as smallpox, cholera, plague, and yellow fever. Fully organized quarantine stations are located at all major seaports and airports. The Branch is responsible for enforcing standards of hygiene on federal property including ports and terminals, interprovincial means of transport, and Canadian ships and aircraft.

Under the Department of National Health and Welfare Act and the Immigration Act, the Medical Services Branch determines in Canada and other countries the health status of all persons referred to them by the Department of Manpower and Immigration for Canadian immigration purposes and, additionally, provides or arranges health care services for certain persons after arrival in Canada, including immigrants who become ill en route to their destination or while seeking employment.

The Medical Services Branch is responsible for a comprehensive occupational health program for federal employees throughout the country and abroad. This service includes health counselling, surveillance of the occupational and working environment, pre-employment, periodic and special examinations, first aid and emergency treatment, and a wide range of advisory services and special health programs.

The Department provides an advisory service to the Ministry of Transport concerning the health and safety of all those involved in Canadian civil aviation. Regional and headquarters aviation medical officers review all medical examinations, participate in aviation safety programs, and assist in air accident investigations. Close liaison with authorities responsible for foreign aviation medicine is maintained as standards are usually based upon international agreements.

The objectives of Prosthetic Services are to make available high quality services in prosthetic and orthotic rehabilitation under the terms of agreements in effect with the provinces and with the Department of Veterans Affairs, and to provide a national focal point for expertise in this field.

A number of Medical Services physicians provide an assessment and advisory service to the Unemployment Insurance Commission in relation to claims for benefits under the Sickness and Maternity Benefit Plan. The Canada Pension Plan maintains its own disability assessment service.

Emergency Health Services prepares plans to ensure that the health component of the Department is able to continue operating in the event or threat of nuclear attack and to advise, assist and stimulate provincial and municipal health departments in emergency health planning for both peacetime and wartime emergencies.

5.1.2 Health protection

Through the Health Protection Branch, the Department is responsible for developing an integrated program to protect the public against unsafe foods, drugs, cosmetics, medical and radiation emitting devices, against harmful microbial agents and technological and social environments deleterious to health, against environmental pollutants and contaminants of all kinds, and against fraudulent drugs and devices.

The Branch contains six operational directorates — Foods, Drugs, Environmental Health, Laboratory Centre for Disease Control, Non-medical Use of Drugs, and Field