

administered by Health and Welfare Canada since April 1973. The federal government shares the costs incurred by the provinces in providing comprehensive services for vocational rehabilitation of physically and mentally disabled persons. Services include social and vocational assessment, counselling, training, maintenance allowances, provision of tools, books and other equipment, remedial and restorative treatments, and provision of prosthetic and orthotic appliances, wheelchairs, and other mobility aids.

3.2.6 Health promotion and physical activity

Health promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over and to improve their health. It is an approach to health which recognizes the importance of quality of life as a dimension to everyday living. Health promotion is viewed as a new kind of public health in which importance is given to achieving, maintaining and improving health. Health promotion includes three basic mechanisms; self-care, mutual aid and the creation of healthy environments. All sectors of society have a role to play in preserving and enhancing the health of Canadians. For health promotion this role is seen to include fostering public participation in order that people assert greater control over factors affecting their lives; strengthening community health services; and co-ordinating the health aspects of public policies.

Areas where health promotion efforts are presently underway include family health, adolescent sexuality, nutrition, impaired driving, mental health, tobacco use, and social support for seniors. Health promotion is taking place formally or informally in a variety of settings including health and social services, schools, training centres, the workplace, homes, neighbourhoods and community centres.

Health promotion is increasingly gaining merit as an approach which responds effectively to current and future health concerns.

A Canada fitness survey was undertaken in 1981 by Fitness and Amateur Sport Canada to assess fitness levels of a representative cross-section of the population. The survey findings revealed that 56% of Canadians aged 10 and over are physically active. The survey also revealed that, despite increased participation, Canadians are still not as fit as they could be; only 25% are active enough to potentially benefit their cardiovascular health.

Fitness and Amateur Sport Canada seeks to increase awareness of the importance of fitness and encourage greater participation in physical

activity of Canadians including sub-population groups such as low-skill and handicapped persons, teenagers, blue-collar workers, rural residents and older adults. This is accomplished via numerous programs and activities which could be grouped under four key areas: promotion — co-ordinating Canada's Fitweek, formerly the National Physical Activity Week, and supporting the PARTICIPAction Program; leadership — developing guidelines for the training of fitness leaders and programs to train management volunteers; participation — increasing the number of opportunities for Canadians to participate in physical activity and encouraging the provision of adopted activity opportunities for certain target groups; and research — facilitating the conduct of research projects and national surveys and the dissemination of results. These activities are carried out in conjunction with or on the basis of liaison and co-ordination between the various levels of government, national associations, private sector partners, volunteers and practitioners in the field.

3.2.7 Voluntary agencies

Voluntary agencies are very much involved in the health field. Health departments in Canada recognize and support the intrinsic worth of voluntary action in developing and providing services to promote health and well-being. Historically, voluntary groups have played a major role in promoting public awareness and action leading to the development of Canadian health systems and social services. The voluntary sector, with its grassroots involvement, is in a position to be aware of emerging problems, evolve innovative responses and mobilize rapidly to meet perceived human needs. Thus the work of the voluntary sector is complementary to government efforts. The annual value of volunteer labour is estimated at about \$1 billion in the health and social services sector. In 1986-87, Health and Welfare Canada provided sustaining grants totalling \$2.9 million to 51 national voluntary organizations to assist in the operation of their national offices and in carrying out their national responsibilities. In addition, research and project contributions are made toward a wide variety of activities of an innovative or demonstration nature.

3.2.8 Research and planning

Total expenditures for health science research and related scientific activities in Canada in 1985 were estimated at more than \$350 million. Federal contributions were estimated at \$175 million.