

ratio ranged from 459:1 in Quebec to 775:1 in Prince Edward Island. Some of these inter-provincial differences are due to the number of physicians in training. Excluding interns and residents, the 1985 population-per-physician ratios ranged from 511:1 in British Columbia to 820:1 in New Brunswick.

In 1985, 51.5% of active civilian physicians, excluding interns and residents, were general practitioners and family physicians. The remaining 48.5% were certificated specialists. The proportion of certificated specialists was 49.6% in 1975, after growing from about 43% in 1961 to a high of 50.2% in 1973.

Dentists. The number of active dentists increased 49.1% from 1975 to 1985, having kept far ahead of the population growth rate of 11.4% during the same period (Table 3.26). Canada had one dentist per 2,619 people in 1975. The ratio was 1:1,985 in 1985. During the decade no new dental schools were opened. Most schools had relatively stable numbers of graduates. Laval University graduated 16 students in 1976, and 31 in 1985. At the University of Alberta the increase was from 42 in 1976 to 69 in 1985.

Nurses. Nurses represent about two-thirds of all health human resources in Canada and are an integral part of the health care system. Historically, nurses have been predominantly female (99.2% in 1970), but there has since been an increase in the number of male nurses; the percentage of female nurses decreased to 97.4% in 1985. About 36% of nurses worked part-time (less than 35 hours per week) in 1985.

Pharmacists. The number of licensed pharmacists increased from 13,872 in 1975 to 18,813 in 1985 (Table 3.29). There were 658 graduates of pharmacy schools in 1985, 16 more than in 1975. Beginning in 1976, women graduating outnumbered men; 64% of all graduates of pharmacy schools in 1985 were women.

Optometrists. In 1985, there were 2,594 active optometrists in Canada or one per 9,831 persons. This was an increase from one per 12,587 persons in 1975 (Table 3.27). Graduating classes of the two schools of optometry were small in comparison with other professional health disciplines. In 1985, 41 people graduated from the University of Montreal School of Optometry, 5 less than in 1975. A total of 55 graduated in 1985 from the only other school, the University of Waterloo, an increase of 8% over the number of graduates in 1975.

Facilities. In 1986, there were 1,048 public, private and federal hospitals operating and 5,607 special care facilities such as nursing

homes and homes for the elderly. The rate of public hospital beds per 100,000 persons decreased 25% from 1970 to 1977-78 but there was an increase in the rated bed capacity in special care facilities and by 1986 the total number of these facilities had increased to 5,607.

3.4 Use of health services

Physician services. Medical care insurance plans in the 10 provinces made fee-for-service payments for 149 million visit services (office, hospital and home) in 1984-85, at a rate of just under six services per insured person. In addition they paid for 1.8 million major and 2.5 million minor surgical procedures. Of a further 103 million services, close to 70 million were radiology and laboratory services, while the remaining 33 million consisted of obstetrical, anaesthetic, surgical assistance, and assorted other diagnostic and therapeutic services. The above total of about 256 million services does not include out-of-province payments made by provincial medical care insurance plans, services provided to residents of the two northern territories, and millions of services provided by physicians under other arrangements, such as services for which payments were made on a salary or other non-fee basis, services that were the responsibility of Workers' Compensation Boards, uninsured services, and services provided to uninsured persons.

Of the total fee-for-service payments made by provincial medical care insurance plans, about 41% were made for services provided to male patients. Fee payments per insured person aged 65 and over were just over twice as high as payments made per person under age 65.

Dental services. Canadians spent about \$2,200 million on dental care in 1985, slightly less than 6% of total health expenditures.

A significant health care development since 1970 has been the growth of dental insurance. Approximately 13.6 million Canadians, 55.8% of the population, were insured by third-party payment schemes in 1982.

Hospital services. Patients spent over 52 million days in public hospitals in the 1985-86 fiscal year, including more than 8 million days in mental institutions. While the number of days spent in general and allied special hospitals had increased each year from 1978, the number of days spent in mental hospitals for the same period decreased. This was the result of extensive changes in the treatment locations for many mental patients and not a decrease in the prevalence of mental disorders.