

from the fiscal year 1986-87; the Council funded 2,402 grants and 1,530 awards.

The National Health Research and Development Program provided \$21.4 million for health research and related scientific activities in 1987-88. There were 663 projects supported including studies on: the availability, accessibility and quality of health care and the development of models for more cost-effective delivery of health services; investigations into illness prevention and the promotion of healthy lifestyles and behaviour patterns; assessments of genetic, socio-cultural and environmental health risks; research dealing with the health of native peoples; habitation and rehabilitation; and population immune status and communicable disease control. The program also administered special funds for the national AIDS program, and special funds in the area of child sexual abuse and the national drug strategy. Training awards assisted 80 students at the masters and doctoral levels and 61 established health research scientists received career awards.

3.3 Health workers and facilities

Canadians are served by a system of hospital and medical care complemented by a broad range of other health services. In 1987, health workers included 55,275 physicians, 241,955 registered nurses, 13,503 active licensed dentists and a large pool of other health professionals in such activities as diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, public health and health promotion.

Physicians. The number of active civilian physicians in Canada, including interns and residents, increased at a rate substantially exceeding population growth from 1975 to 1987 (Table 3.25). The number of persons per physician was 585 in 1975 and 467 in 1987. In the 10 provinces the ratio ranged from 433:1 in Quebec to 736:1 in New Brunswick. Excluding interns and residents, the 1987 population-per-physician ratio ranged from 501:1 in British Columbia to 800:1 in New Brunswick, and stood at 542:1 in Canada as a whole. The increase in the number of physicians was largely due to an inflow of graduates of Canadian medical schools averaging more than 1,770 per year during the 10 years ending in 1987.

In 1985, 52.1% of active civilian physicians, excluding interns and residents, were general practitioners and family physicians. The remaining 47.9% were certified specialists. The proportion of certified specialists held steady at about 49% from 1975 to 1984 and eased downward over the next three years.

Dentists. The number of active dentists increased 34.1% from 1977 to 1987, substantially exceeding the population increase during the same period (Table 3.26). Canada had one dentist per 2,619 people in 1975. The ratio was 1:1,910 in 1987.

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 (99.1% in 1970), but there has since been an increase in the number of male nurses; the percentage of female nurses had decreased to 97.4% by 1987. About 33% of nurses worked part-time (less than 35 hours per week) in 1987.

Pharmacists. The number of licensed pharmacists increased from 13,872 in 1975 to 16,348 in 1987 (Table 3.29). There were 689 graduates of pharmacy schools in 1987. Women graduating outnumbered men; 66% of all new graduates of pharmacy schools in 1987 were women.

Optometrists. In 1986, there were 2,474 active optometrists in Canada or one per 10,308 persons. This was an increase from 13,128 persons per optometrist in 1976. (Table 3.27).

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 hospital bed-to-population ratio has remained stable at about 7 beds per 1,000 population over the last decade.

3.4 Use of health services

Physician services. In 1985-86, medical care insurance plans in the 10 provinces made fee-for-service payments for 154 million visit services (office, hospital and home). In addition, they paid for 1.8 million major and 2.6 million minor surgical procedures. Of a further 110 million services, over 75 million were radiology and laboratory services, while the remaining 35 million consisted of obstetrical, anaesthetic, surgical assistance, and assorted other diagnostic and therapeutic services. The above total of about 269 million services did 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 40%