

#### Subsection 4.—Medical Services

**Indians and Eskimos.**—Through the Directorate of Medical Services, the Department of National Health and Welfare staffs and operates various facilities for a registered population of about 192,000 Indians and 12,000 Eskimos. Responsibility for the general welfare of Indians and Eskimos in the community is shared with the Indian Affairs Branch of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration and with the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources.

In the provinces, the Department provides medical and public health services to registered Indians or Eskimos who are not included under provincial arrangements and who are unable to afford to provide for themselves. A large volume of the service in treatment and health education is rendered to patients through departmental clinics of the out-patient type which are staffed by medical and other public health personnel. In remote areas, the key facility is frequently the departmental nursing station, a combined emergency treatment and public health unit having two to four beds under the direction of one or two nurses; about 50 of these were operated throughout Canada in 1962. The Department maintains about 20 hospitals at strategic points and co-operates elsewhere with community, mission or company hospitals. General and chronic hospital care is prepaid as part of provincial hospital insurance schemes, and mental and tuberculosis care is met directly by the Federal Government.

The accessibility of essential medical and health services to most of the Indian population and, to a lesser extent the Eskimo, has made possible a steady decline in the incidence of disease, although the rate is still high. Wherever practicable, there has been an increasing integration with provincial and municipal health agencies. Native health workers are being trained to give instruction in health care and sanitation.

**Northern Health.**—Because of the special problems in developing health services in the Far North, the Directorate has been given the responsibility of co-ordinating federal and territorial health care for all residents. In so doing, it undertakes the functions of a health department for the Council of the Northwest Territories and assists the territorial government of the Yukon in its steps to provide certain health services. A close liaison is maintained with the federal departments directly responsible for administrative matters affecting these groups or geographic areas.

In the Yukon Territory, services for the white population administered through the Commissioner for the Yukon and provided on a cost-sharing basis with the Department of National Health and Welfare include complete treatment for tuberculosis, payment for services rendered at the Alberta cancer clinics, mental hospital care through arrangements with the Province of British Columbia and medical care for indigent patients. Public health nursing services, measures for control of communicable diseases, and administration of the principal public hospital are primarily the responsibility of the Northern Health Service of the Department of National Health and Welfare. In the Northwest Territories similar services are administered through the Northern Health Service, the costs being shared by the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources and the Department of National Health and Welfare. Indigent residents are eligible for medical, dental and optical services as well as for tuberculosis and mental care.

Hospital insurance plans in both the Yukon and Northwest Territories came into operation in 1960.

**Immigrants.**—The Department of National Health and Welfare advises on the administration of sections of the Immigration Act dealing with health, and conducts in Canada and other countries the medical examination of applicants for immigration. It also provides care for immigrants who become ill en route to their destination or while awaiting employment. Further assistance in the provision of hospital and medical services is available to indigent immigrants during their first year in Canada, either from the Federal Government or from the province with federal sharing of costs.