

The ten original grants were inaugurated to assist the provinces in achieving a number of broad purposes which, set out in relation to the grants with which they are most closely associated, are as follows:—

To survey provincial health services.....	The Health Survey Grant
To aid in new hospital construction.....	The Hospital Construction Grant
To improve public health facilities and services in rural and urban Canada.....	The General Public Health Grant
To intensify efforts to combat mental illness, tuberculosis, cancer, venereal disease, rheumatism and arthritis, and crippling conditions in children.	{ The Mental Health Grant
	{ The Tuberculosis Control Grant
	{ The Cancer Control Grant
	{ The Venereal Disease Control Grant
To increase the number of trained workers.....	The Professional Training Grant
To encourage health research.....	The Public Health Research Grant

Background of the Program.—While the Canadian constitution places primary responsibility for public health matters upon the provinces, the nature of particular health problems and the fiscal needs of the provinces have combined to bring about federal participation in certain health areas. A federal Department of Health was established in 1919 and the Government began in that year to extend conditional grants-in-aid to the provinces to assist in the control of venereal disease. This grant was generally believed to have been successful in achieving its object of promoting more effective provincial control programs and, although it was discontinued for a few years during the 1930's, the grant was favourably reported upon by the Rowell-Sirois Commission in 1940. In a study prepared for the Commission, it was concluded that federal grants-in-aid of the type established for venereal disease control were required to support broad public health programs which should include sustained attacks upon tuberculosis, mental illness, venereal disease and cancer, together with expanded services in the fields of general public health, maternity care and industrial hygiene.

A parallel concern about the economic aspects of illness led at various times to Parliamentary examination of health insurance as a means of meeting the costs of medical services. By the early 1940's, active consideration was being given to plans for health insurance combined with federal grant support for the training of health workers, for research, and for programs to control a number of specific diseases. In 1941, a Bill was drafted in which public health grants were made conditional upon the adoption by the provinces of health-insurance measures. This approach was retained throughout the intensive examination of the question by the Special Committee on Social Security of the House of Commons in 1943 and also appeared, somewhat modified, in the *Proposals of the Government of Canada* for the Dominion-Provincial Conference on Reconstruction held in 1945. The Proposals set out four types of financial assistance which the Federal Government was prepared to make available to the provinces as part of a general program of reconstruction including: a planning and organization grant to help in the preliminary work of organizing provincial health-insurance systems; health-insurance grants designed to give the provinces financial aid in establishing comprehensive insurance programs; low-cost loans for hospital construction; and grants of varying amounts for such purposes as general public health, tuberculosis control, mental health, venereal-disease control, crippled children, blindness, professional training and public health research.