

Saskatchewan.—The Saskatchewan Department of Public Health has five main Branches: Regional Health Services, Medical and Hospital Services, Psychiatric Services, Research and Statistics, and Administrative Services. The Health Services Planning Commission functions as an advisory and planning agency on major policy and administrative matters in the Department.

The Regional Health Services Branch includes divisions of communicable disease control, child health, laboratories, venereal disease control, nursing services, dental health, nutrition and sanitation. The Communicable Diseases Division distributes free vaccines and sera to doctors, health departments and hospitals and supervises immunization programs and poliomyelitis clinics at Saskatoon and Regina. The Child Health Division provides services for crippled children, including mobile consultation units and a rehabilitation centre for cerebral palsy patients. Public health laboratory services and the free distribution of certain drugs and biologicals are carried out by the Provincial Laboratories. Field services for venereal disease, tuberculosis, mental health and other public health programs are provided by the Nursing Services Division.

The Regional Health Services Branch is responsible for the organization of health regions which are administered by locally elected health boards although staff is appointed and financial assistance is provided by the Province. Eight of the proposed regions are currently in operation. In addition to the general public health services provided in all regions, the Swift Current Health Region has a prepaid medical-care plan including general practitioner, specialist and diagnostic care for all residents, and limited dental services for children. The plan is financed by personal and property taxes with some Provincial Government contributions. Dental health programs for children have been launched in two other regions.

The Medical and Hospital Services Branch is responsible for the operation of the Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan, administers the program of medical services to most public assistance recipients, and supervises the operations of the municipal doctor programs and the Air Ambulance Service. In addition to free hospital care, complete medical as well as dental and optical services, including some auxiliary services, are provided to the recipients (including spouses) of the universal old age pension who were formerly in receipt of the old age means-test pension or who can qualify for the provincial supplementary allowance. Persons and their dependants receiving blindness or mothers' allowances, social aid cases and provincial wards are also eligible. Drugs are provided subject to deterrent charges paid by patients of 20 p.c. of the cost. The Provincial Government meets the expenses under the medical program and, for most of these cases, the hospital insurance tax as well. Provincial subsidies of 25 cents per capita per annum and equalization grants are paid to about 100 municipalities with municipal doctor contracts.

The Psychiatric Services Branch supervises psychiatric hospitals and administers community psychiatric services including clinics. Free care and treatment is given for all mentally ill and mentally defective persons requiring hospitalization. The tuberculosis control program, operated by the Saskatchewan Anti-tuberculosis League, includes preventive and treatment services, the latter financed by provincial per diem grants and municipal levies. The Saskatchewan Cancer Commission co-ordinates all cancer-control measures and operates publicly financed consultative, diagnostic and treatment clinics at Saskatoon and Regina.