

These Divisions include Blindness Control, Child and Maternal Health, Occupational Health, Nutrition, Mental Health, Dental Health, Epidemiology, Hospital Design, the Laboratory of Hygiene, Information Services, and Research.

### Subsection 2.—The Dominion Council of Health

The Dominion Council of Health is a statutory advisory body to the Minister of National Health and Welfare, established in 1919 and deriving its present legislative authority from Sect. 7 of the National Health and Welfare Act 1944 (R.S.C. 1952, c. 74). It is composed of the Deputy Minister of National Health who acts as Chairman, the deputy ministers of health of each of the ten provinces and five appointees of the Governor in Council, selected by tradition to represent such major segments of the population as agriculture, organized labour and women's organizations.

The duties and powers of the Council as formally prescribed by the Governor in Council are:—

- (1) The consideration of matters relating to the promotion or preservation of the health of the people of Canada and the initiation of recommendations and proposals to the Minister of National Health and Welfare and other appropriate authorities in regard thereto;
- (2) The furnishing of advice to the Minister of National Health and Welfare in respect to the matters provided in Sect. 5 of the Department of National Health and Welfare Act, relating to the promotion or preservation of the health of the people of Canada, over which the Parliament of Canada has jurisdiction.

Through the Council a direct means of co-operation at the technical level is provided between provincial health departments and the Department of National Health and Welfare. In addition to being able to draw on both federal and provincial resources to aid its deliberations it is assisted by a number of technical advisory committees composed of federal and provincial officials in different specialized fields. These committees include the Technical Advisory Committee on Public Health Laboratory Services, the Advisory Committee on Mental Health, the Federal-Provincial Nutrition Committee, the Federal-Provincial Conference on Health Education, the Federal-Provincial Conference of Communicable Disease Control Directors and the Technical Advisory Committee on Public Health Engineering.

The Council usually meets twice each year. Any member may submit items for the agenda and any agency wishing to make representation to the Council may do so. Consideration of a matter by the Council usually infers that it is of some common interest or concern to more than one province, but members are free to seek its advice regarding a problem of particular or individual interest should they so desire.

Although the Council is of a purely advisory character its recommendations reflect the considered opinions of senior health administrators and scientific workers across the country and have had very considerable influence on the development of public health administration in Canada. The recommendations frequently have led to an early combined approach by federal and provincial governments which might otherwise have been achieved only after long periods of negotiation.

The unique effectiveness of an organization such as this, in a federally governed country, has been demonstrated on a number of occasions. The Council has taken an active part in the development of the National Health Program and, in addition to advising on the general operation of the program and on situations developing in different provinces, has played an important role in such combined federal-provincial projects as the National Sickness Survey. Through the arrangements made by the Council for the production and distribution of ACTH and cortisone for use by clinical investigators throughout Canada it has been estimated that the clinical assessment of their value was advanced by at least two years. In the same way the Council was able to facilitate arrangements for the production of gamma globulin and later of Salk vaccine (*see pp. 258-60*).

Because of its character the Council can act objectively in promoting the best interests of public health. It has come to be regarded and respected as a focal point of national leadership in assessing and meeting Canada's health needs.