



REFERENCE PAPERS

INFORMATION DIVISION

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No. 41 CANADA'S NEW NATIONAL HEALTH PROGRAMME

In 1948 a new National Health Programme was launched by the federal government consisting of grants to the provinces totalling more than \$30,000,000 annually, to aid them in extending and strengthening their health services. It is hoped that this will open up a new era for public health in Canada and make possible greatly accelerated progress in Canada's fight against disease.

A broad outline of the Programme was presented to Parliament on May 14, 1948. Its magnitude may be seen in the fact that, excluding the health services for Canada's veterans and for the Indians, the \$30,000,000 annual expenditure will equal the federal government's outlay for health over the past 27 years and will be nine times that of the previous year.

In most respects, on the basis of expenditure for each citizen, Canada's health grant programme exceeds that of the United States. For example, the Dominion will spend twice as much on hospital construction; three and one-half times as much for public health; Canada's tuberculosis control grants will be nearly five times as large; her cancer grants will be 14 times as great, and she will spend 16 times as much as the United States on grants for mental health care.

A Co-operative Effort

In Canada, health has always been, for the most part, a responsibility of the provinces. The National Health Programme does not disturb that balance, but rather will supplement the health services which have already been developed by the provincial departments of health. As interest is general in the achievement of good health, close co-operation between the federal and provincial governments has been possible to ensure the most effective use of the federal grants. All proposals are considered in relation to the agreed and closely integrated national plan, and only those are undertaken which have been jointly approved as most likely to raise the level of the nation's health.

Mr. Paul Martin, Minister of National Health and Welfare, in presenting the Programme to public health authorities said:

With this close federal - provincial partnership for good health, and with these new financial resources to accelerate the drive against disease, we can confidently expect a steady united advance in all our health services. Now it is possible to move far beyond the early stages of health care in Canada; to press on towards our ultimate goal - a positive state of good health for every Canada.

Grants to the Provinces

The grants to the provinces under the National Health Programme are designed to promote three things: health surveys; a variety of health projects, at present eight in number; and hospital construction.