

Newfoundland has for many years administered two programs that cover most low-income groups in the province. These have been the Cottage Hospital Medical Care Plan, covering outlying districts for physicians' services provided by doctors employed by the government, with provision for referral to specialists. The Children's Health Service has covered in-hospital care for all children under the age of 16 in all parts of the province. In addition, recipients of public assistance are eligible, if individually certified, for a wide range of health-care services.

Canada Assistance Plan

Provincial programs that provide health-care services for welfare recipients are now being supported financially for these services by a new federal program known as the Canada Assistance Plan. This program provides for federal payment of half the cost of personal health-care services, as well as welfare services. The provinces are free to make available a wide range of health and other services, including home-nursing and homemakers' services. The only eligibility test under the legislation is that associated with financial need determined on a uniform basis within the province, regardless of the cause of need and without reference to employment status.

Rehabilitation Services

In all provinces, public and voluntary agencies co-operate to provide rehabilitation services to assist disabled or chronically ill persons to greater independence. Provincial health, welfare or education departments administer vocational rehabilitation programs for disabled adults who can be restored to gainful employment. Independent, specialized programs are operated for war veterans, injured workmen, handicapped children and for persons with various disabilities such as blindness, tuberculosis, mental illness, mental retardation, arthritis, cystic fibrosis, paraplegia and other conditions. In all provinces, legislation is in force providing for payment of compensation, as well as rehabilitation services, for workmen disabled in the course of their employment.

Under the terms of the Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Act, 1961, the federal Department of Manpower and Immigration shares equally with nine provinces the cost of co-ordination, assessment and provision of any needed services to disabled persons, and of staff training and research. The federal program is administered through five regional offices. In each province the provincial co-ordinator or director of rehabilitation is responsible for identifying disabled persons with a vocational potential and referring them to the appropriate agency for restorative (including prostheses as necessary) vocational assessment and training, counselling and job placement services as required. The local employment offices, known as Canada Manpower Centres, employ special service officers to place handicapped persons in suitable work.

The transfer of Prosthetic Services from the Department of Veterans Affairs to the Department of National Health and Welfare on January 1, 1966, extended coverage for these services to civilians in accordance with federal agreements with provincial health departments. Prosthetic services are available from a central prosthetic establishment and 11 district centres across the country. Research for the development and improvement of prosthetic or orthotic appliances is also carried out and, more recently, a training program to produce qualified prosthetists and orthotists has been established in Canada.