

( . . . ) The question may be what we know about the natural history of that gall-bladder disease and if there is some way of affecting it so those people do not have problems.<sup>158</sup>

Dr. Robert Spasoff, speaking at the recent CMA Conference said that, in his view, the amount of research money allocated to each particular disease category should bear some resemblance to the burden the category poses on society in terms of its frequency and impact. As Dr. Spasoff points out, however, the Health and Welfare study of the economic burden of disease found major discrepancies between the burden imposed and the amount of research dollars spent on them. Injury, for example, was the category imposing the highest economic burden but it received the fewest research dollars.

Dr. Spasoff, as well as a variety of witnesses to the Committee, suggested that, to be responsive to public need, more emphasis must be given in research to environmental and socio-behavioural factors affecting health, to rehabilitation, disease prevention, health promotion and health services research. It is suggested that availability of information on the health status of the population, individual risk factors and patterns of health services use is essential to this research.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

37. That the federal government adequately fund the National Health Research and Development Program to develop procedures to measure outcomes in health care rather than assuming that if the structures and processes are in place (e.g. hospitals, technology, medical personnel) the outcomes will also be satisfactory.
38. That the federal government establish a regular program of population health surveys making it possible to relate individual risk factors and patterns of use of health care services to longer term health and costs.
39. That the federal government adequately fund to the National Health Research and Development Program to support research into innovative and cost-effective ways of delivering high quality health care services across Canada.
40. That pilot projects in innovative approaches to health care funded by the federal government include evaluation procedures.

<sup>158</sup> Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, Issue No. 36, p. 19.