

*Questions*

2. If so, does the government bear any portion of the cost?

3. Who selects the pensioners who are to be given treatment?

4. How many have been treated to date and of these in how many cases has the treatment been successful?

*Answer by: Mr. Martin:*

1. Yes. In 1947 the federal government introduced a scheme for treating blind persons in cases where such treatment would restore vision. The provinces of Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, New Brunswick, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia are now participating or have agreed to participate in this scheme.

2. Yes. The federal government bears 75 per cent of the cost, the province bearing the balance.

3. The blindness control division of the Department of National Health and Welfare aids in the selection of cases for treatment

in collaboration with the provincial authorities. Most cases are selected on the recommendation of the oculists who make the examinations for blindness allowances purposes. In some cases other oculists ask for authority to treat pensioners, frequently the Canadian National Institute for the Blind recommends treatment, and in a few cases the blind pensioners themselves ask for treatment. All cases are carefully reviewed in the blindness control division before treatment is authorized. If it is doubtful whether treatment would restore vision, a new eye examination is secured before authority for treatment is given.

Most of the cases treated are new recipients of blindness allowances whose blindness is due to cataract. The treatment is administered provincially and the patient can choose his own eye doctor.

4. 258 blind persons have been treated. 191 cases have been successful. 40 additional cases are under treatment now.

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