

Rehabilitation Services

Numerous public and voluntary agencies provide rehabilitation services to assist disabled or chronically-ill persons to greater independence. Provincial health or welfare departments administer vocational rehabilitation programmes for disabled adults who can be restored to gainful employment. Independent programmes are operated for war veterans, injured workmen, handicapped children and for persons handicapped by blindness, tuberculosis, mental illness, paraplegia and other conditions. In addition, special services established in the main cities include medical-rehabilitation departments in general hospitals, separate rehabilitation centres, sheltered workshops and vocational centres and special classes and schools for children with physical or mental defects. Several provinces maintain registries of disabled persons or handicapped children to facilitate case-finding, referral and co-ordination of services.

Under the terms of the Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Act, 1961, the federal Department of Labour shares equally with nine provinces the costs of co-ordination, assessment and provision of any needed services to disabled persons, and of staff training and research. The provincial co-ordinator or director of rehabilitation is responsible for identifying disabled persons with a vocational potential and to refer them to the appropriate agency for restorative, vocational assessment and training or job-placement services as required. The local offices of the National Employment Service employ special-service officers to place handicapped persons in suitable work.

Other official and voluntary agencies have developed sizeable rehabilitation programmes. Under the National Health Grants Programme, \$2.8 million is allocated to the provinces to extend medical-rehabilitation services, and other grants are used for rehabilitation of the tubercular, mentally ill and deficient, and to improve services for the chronically ill. The Department of Veterans Affairs provides comprehensive medical-social services for disabled or aging veterans, and several federal agencies co-operate to assist disabled Indians and Eskimos. Provincial health departments, aided by community agencies, provide rehabilitation services to mental and tuberculosis patients. The principal national voluntary agency in this field, the Canadian Rehabilitation Council for the Disabled, represents the two main provincial groups that provide treatment and ancillary services to handicapped children and adults.

PART II - INCOME MAINTENANCE

Family Allowances: Children under 16 years of age who were born in Canada or have resided here for at least one year are eligible for Family Allowances. The Allowances, which were established in 1945, are paid from general revenue by the Department of National Health and Welfare, involve no means test and are not considered as income for tax purposes. The income-tax exemption allowed for dependent children eligible for Family Allowances is, however, less than that for those not so eligible. Allowances are paid at the monthly rate of \$6 for children under 10 years and \$8 for children 10 to 15 years of age. The Department pays family assistance, at the rates applicable for Family Allowances, for each child under 16 years of age supported by an immigrant who has landed for permanent residence in Canada or by a Canadian returning to Canada to reside permanently. This assistance is paid for a period of one year, until the child is eligible for Family Allowances.

Old Age Security: A pension of \$75 a month is paid by the Federal Government to all persons aged 70 or over who have been resident in Canada at least ten years. It is financed through a 3 percent sales tax, a 3 percent tax on net corporation income and, subject to a maximum limit of \$120 a year, a 4 percent tax on individual net taxable incomes. Pensioners who leave Canada continue to receive their pensions outside the country provided they have had 25 years of residence in Canada since attaining the age of 21.