

OPTION 3 The federal government can negotiate its role in relation to health care with the provinces.

Option 3 would require the development of a national policy on health care. Development of this policy would include the division of responsibility for health between the federal, provincial and territorial governments, the basics of funding under EPF, and the principles of the *Canada Health Act*.

OPTION 4 The provincial and territorial governments could assume total responsibility for the administration, delivery and funding of their own health care. Options 3 and 4 are not mutually exclusive and therefore, Option 4 can also be seen as one of the alternatives under Option 3.

Under either Option 3 or Option 4, the funding and delivery of health care services could be the responsibility of the provinces, with an accompanying transfer of tax room from the federal government to the provinces, and the federal government could retain its present responsibilities in health prevention and promotion, fitness and amateur sport, and services to Indian people, immigrants, and federal public servants. This could include a continuing role for the federal government in education, research, the development of a national health information system and national policy objectives.

Options 1, 2 and 3 could be compatible with the development of a national policy incorporating specified national objectives in the health care field. In a decentralized system in which funding and delivery of health care in their jurisdictions would be the responsibility of the provinces and territories (Option 4), maintaining standards would presumably also be the responsibility of the provinces and territories.

RECOMMENDATION

Having considered these four options the Committee recommends:

- 1. That the federal government, in co-operation with the provincial and territorial governments, develop a clearly stated national policy on health care that is consistent with the existing *Canada Health Act*. Development of this policy would include the division of responsibilities for health between the federal, provincial and territorial governments, the basics of funding under EPF and the standards of the *Canada Health Act*.**