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1975 June

No. 94
(Revised June 1975)

Dept. of External Affairs
Min. des Affaires extérieures

SEP 15 1975

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REFERENCE

HEALTH AND WELFARE IN CANADA

(Prepared in the Department of National Health and Welfare)

PART I -- HEALTH SERVICES

The administration of health services in Canada comes primarily under the jurisdiction of the ten provincial governments, which delegate considerable responsibility for community health to the local and regional authorities.(1) In promoting the health of Canadians, the Federal Government is concerned with health matters of national and international scope. It gives important financial support to provincial medical and hospital insurance programs, and to the development of other health services. In addition, numerous voluntary organizations provide health services and perform public-education and research activities at the national, provincial and local levels, in many cases aided by government grants.

As the chief federal agency in the field of health, the Department of National Health and Welfare deals with many specialized health matters, as well as assisting provincial health departments. The Health Protection Branch protects the Canadian public from health hazards by ensuring adequate standards for the public sale of foods, drugs, cosmetics and medical devices. It also carries out surveillance, control and research activities on the health effects of environmental factors and the control of communicable diseases. The Health Programs Branch administers the federal aspects of the shared-cost provincial hospital and medical-care insurance programs and makes available technical advisory services, manpower-training assistance and health-research grants to provincial health departments, universities and voluntary agencies. The chief function of the Medical Services Branch is to provide or arrange for medical and health services for native Indians and residents of the Yukon and Northwest Territories; its other functions include the provision of quarantine services and immigration medical services and advice on the health and safety of persons involved in civil aviation.(2)

- (1) The two territorial governments in the sparsely-populated northern parts of Canada also have jurisdiction over certain health services.
- (2) The Branch pays health-insurance premiums on behalf of those native people for whom the Federal Government is responsible.

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