

health services throughout Canada, some solution has to be found for the problem of areas where the population is scattered. In Alberta, for example, this problem is being met by making extensive use of travelling mental health clinics to provide treatment as well as diagnostic services, frequently under the most restricting circumstances.

Although the mental health service has traditionally been a responsibility of provincial health departments, universities and other qualified organizations can assist greatly in developing adequate programs. Participation by Canadian universities is well exemplified by Dalhousie University at Halifax where it has been possible to develop a training program for the four Atlantic provinces, utilizing the facilities of the University and those available throughout these provinces as well. The co-operation in this area, with the improvement of services which has resulted, indicates the progress which can be made when the desire for co-operation is present and can be mobilized.

Bolstering the preventive and treatment services has been a greatly accelerated program of mental health research which is being carried out all across Canada by well-organized research teams. In the field of therapy, various forms of treatment have been investigated which aid in the cure of illnesses such as epilepsy, the neuroses, depression and schizophrenia. Some of these methods depend upon drugs and some are of a psychotherapeutic nature.

Treatment measures are, of course, aided by reliable and valid diagnoses which, in turn, depend upon an understanding of the functioning of the body and its environment. Marked advances have been made through the studies of body chemistry, the functioning and structure of nervous, glandular and other human tissues. A number of technical methods have been used to study the mechanisms of brain action, with the result that epilepsy is better understood and fundamental knowledge of abnormal behaviour, as well as normal functions of the brain, has been gained.

Although more than half a million dollars in federal funds is now available annually for mental health research, the budget is necessarily small in relation to the magnitude of the problem. It would seem to me that there is a need to define areas of research more clearly. I think the time has come when ways and means must be explored for attaining a well-balanced research program in keeping with defined objectives, as well as the facilities and personnel available. An example of the present lack of balance can be seen in the numerous projects on schizophrenia, whereas none are being carried out on the problem of mental deficiency.

Although achievements in research and in the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of mental illness have been remarkable in recent years, much remains to be done to help lessen the heavy toll of mental ill health. I shall touch briefly on a few of the problems that call for continuing attention.

1. Development of Provincial Mental Health Divisions

In any truly province-wide program providing proper co-ordination between the activities of the official and voluntary agencies, there must be some over-all control. Prior to the establishment of the National Health Program, only the larger provinces had developed a provincial mental health division.