

In the final area to be addressed, that of federal-provincial cooperation, we have received several suggestions and, in one sense, warnings. In light of the testimony which we have heard that depending on the province or territory of residence, there are twelve different standards of living for disabled persons who receive social assistance, we feel that federal-provincial issues must be addressed. We also heard of serious anomalies in the administration of federal-provincial cost-sharing programs such as the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) and the Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Program (VRDP).

Submissions made by different organizations suggested different solutions. The representatives of the Canadian Disability Rights Council told us that they have concluded from their legal research that Section 15 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* requires the federal government to administer its funds under cost-sharing agreements in such a way that the equality of persons with disabilities is advanced. As a measure of its frustration, the ACE Committee urged that the federal government should tie its spending power to the implementation by the provinces of national standards for disability-related programs.

We also heard other less drastic and divisive coordinating proposals that might be tried. These included the appointment of a Prime Minister's personal representative to negotiate alterations in agreements with the provinces in critical areas where programs are cost-shared. In a more positive vein, the CPA advocates the creation of a federal-provincial advisory committee and tabled a proposal that issues related to the disabled persons should be considered at the First Ministers Conference this autumn. This latter suggestion has considerable merit both for raising the national profile of issues related to disability, and providing the flexibility for the federal government and the provinces to decide on a mutually acceptable course for future action.