

Will You Live Longer If You Move to Canada?

Maybe yes, maybe no. Generally speaking you will live as long in one place as in the other. Statistics which rank countries in terms of health achievements are misleading; the range is slight, and there are no average people anywhere.

Statistically, the average Canadian lives a bit longer than the average American, but that does not mean that, for example, a middle-class insurance executive in Montreal lives longer than a middle-class insurance executive in Hartford, Connecticut. There are probably only two areas of significant difference between health care in the two countries: the breadth of coverage and the direct cost to individuals.

Just about everyone in Canada has easy access to comprehensive health care. There are full facilities in remote rural areas, and any out-of-

pocket cost to the patient is minimal. Doctors treating low-income patients receive the same fees as those treating the most wealthy.

The United States has about ten times as many people as Canada and greater concentrations of low-income people living in cities and others living in both urban and remote rural areas that do not have effective medical care available. Americans spend more of their personal incomes on health care than Canadians (10.4 per cent to 8.6 per cent), but the US combination of government support and private insurance provides a narrower coverage in which individuals can suffer great financial misfortunes. (Some 50,000 Americans go bankrupt each year as a result of heavy medical expenses.)

Top left: W. M. Crawford, an industrial hygienist for British Columbia's Workers' Compensation Board, measures noise at a mill. The planer enclosure behind him has reduced levels by 60 per cent.

Bottom left: In March 1977, the government announced that experiments conducted in the toxicology research division of Canada's health department had established a link between saccharin and cancer. As of 1 February 1978, saccharin and foods and beverages containing saccharin could no longer be purchased in Canadian grocery stores. However saccharin alone or in combination with cyclamate remains available in pharmacies as a non-prescription drug.

Right: Darlene and Kari, who have cerebral palsy, use Blissymbols to communicate. Charles K. Bliss developed the symbols as a pictographic international language. (Δ represents safety; Λ and Δ represent man and woman.) Blissymbols were first introduced as a language for non-speaking children at the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre in 1971.

