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HEALTH AND WELFARE IN CANADA

PART I - HEALTH SERVICES

Medical and hospital care are provided largely through the private physician and community-owned or voluntary hospital; supporting public-health services are a provincial responsibility, sometimes delegated to the municipality. All provinces and territories operate hospital insurance and diagnostic services under a federal-provincial programme, and preventive and other supporting services are well established in most areas of the provinces. Health services for immigrants who are in need during their first year in Canada are provided by the Federal Government, or by the provinces under a federal-provincial cost-sharing agreement.

Organization of Services

The Federal Government administers certain programmes and provides assistance and advisory consultative services to provincial health departments. The Department of National Health and Welfare is mainly responsible for federal participation in health matters. It controls food and drugs, including narcotics, administers quarantine and immigration medical services, carries out international health obligations, and provides health services to Indians, Eskimos, sick mariners and other groups. It serves the provinces in an advisory and co-ordinating capacity and makes grants to certain national voluntary agencies. In addition, it provides financial assistance for the development of provincial health and hospital services through the National Health Grant Programme, and for provincial hospital-insurance programmes through the Hospital Insurance and Diagnostic Services Act, under which the Federal Government shares approximately half the cost of hospital care, excluding care in tuberculosis and mental and custodial-care institutions, which is the responsibility of the province. Treatment services for persons coming under their jurisdiction are administered by the Departments of Veterans Affairs and of National Defence. The Dominion Bureau of Statistics compiles health statistics, the National Research Council, the Defence Research Board and the Department of National Health and Welfare make grants in support of medical research and professional training, and the Department of Agriculture has certain health responsibilities connected with food production.

Hospital Insurance

Services Provided: Under the federal-provincial Hospital Insurance and Diagnostic Services Programme, all provinces and territories make available, on a pre-payment or tax-financed basis, to all persons within their boundaries, standard ward accommodation and the services ordinarily supplied by a hospital, including meals, nursing, laboratories, radiological and other diagnostic procedures, and drugs. Care in mental and tuberculosis institutions is not included in the provincial programme, except in Ontario and Prince Edward Island, but is provided under separate legislation.