

The development of rehabilitation programs has been given impetus under the Medical Rehabilitation and Crippled Children Grant available to all provinces under the National Health Grants program by which some \$2.8 million is allocated to extend and improve medical rehabilitation services for the chronically ill and disabled and to support the training of rehabilitation personnel, through student bursaries and grants to schools of physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy. Ten university schools now offer training in physiotherapy and/or occupational therapy; another three provide training in audiology and speech therapy. Other grants are used for the rehabilitation of the tuberculous, mentally ill, and mentally retarded. Hospital care for the chronically ill and disabled is available under the provincial hospital services plans, which now cover most medical rehabilitation services. The Department of Veterans Affairs provides comprehensive medical-social services for chronically ill and aging veterans and several federal agencies co-operate with provincial and voluntary health agencies to assist handicapped Indians, Eskimos, and new immigrants. Provincial health departments, together with community agencies, provide rehabilitation services to mental and tuberculous patients and other handicapped.

Over and above moneys available under the Department of National Health and Welfare's regular grant programs, a sum of \$500,000 is being provided annually over a five-year period commencing in 1967-68 as a special mental retardation grant to promote the development of new research and demonstration projects in this field across Canada.

Under the Canada Pension Plan and the Quebec Pension Plan implemented in 1966, supplementary disability pensions and rehabilitation benefits for survivors have been granted since February 1968 to disabled widows and widowers, and to a widow with a disabled and dependent child who is over 18 years. Disabled contributors will be eligible for these benefits starting May 1970.

Voluntary Health Agencies

Voluntary agencies continue to play an important role in supplying a variety of professional and voluntary services. These include direct services to patients, health education and information services and the support of health research. Some national, provincial and local voluntary agencies provide services to persons with specific disabilities such as arthritis and rheumatism, blindness, cystic fibrosis, cerebral palsy, deafness, epilepsy, diabetes, mental illness, mental retardation, haemophilia and paraplegia. Two of the largest provincial voluntary organizations, the societies for crippled children (Easter Seals) and the foundations for the disabled (March of Dimes) have merged their programs in seven provinces and are affiliated with the Canadian Rehabilitation Council for the Disabled at the national level. Other community agencies provide specialized services to the general population as needed; examples of these are the home-nursing and co-ordinated home-care services administered by the Victorian Order of Nurses, homemakers' services supplied by community agencies and the Canadian Red Cross, which also operates a loan cupboard for sick-room supplies, physiotherapy and counselling service provided in the home by the Canadian Arthritis and Rheumatism Society, the training of volunteers in first aid and home nursing by the St. John Ambulance Association, as well as the operation of various rehabilitation centres, sheltered workshops and recreation services for the handicapped operated by community agencies.