

## HEALTH AND WELFARE IN 1965

Among the 1965 highlights for the Department of National Health and Welfare were final arrangements for the Canada Pension Plan, discussions on national medical insurance, the creation of the National Council of Welfare, and the appointment of a new Deputy Minister of Health and five directors-general.

### PENSION PLAN

Finishing touches were put to the Canada Pension Plan, the Department's most ambitious programme to date. Under the terms of the Plan, which received Royal Assent on April 3, 1965, contributions began on the first day of the year. Through these contributions insured persons will accumulate protection in the form of retirement pensions, survivors' benefits — such as those for widows and dependent children — and disability benefits. The Plan represents the most comprehensive social-insurance measure ever undertaken in Canada.

### FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL CO-OPERATION

In July, the Prime Minister announced the willingness of the Federal Government to make a fiscal contribution to any province initiating a plan for medical-care insurance that would meet certain minimal conditions. These are: that the plan cover all residents of a province; that it provide for the payment of services rendered by physicians; that its benefits be transferable or portable between provinces; and that it be publicly administered. The size of the federal contribution was announced as being approximately half the average national *per capita* cost of payments made to physicians.

At the time of the federal-provincial conference of health ministers in September, the Prime Minister announced the setting up of a Health Resources Fund amounting to \$500 million over a 15-year period beginning in 1966. Its purpose is to support the construction, renovation and equipping of institutions engaged in the training of personnel for the health professions.

### SMOKING AND HEALTH PROGRAMME

The summer of 1965 revealed the degree to which the Canadian Smoking and Health Programme had succeeded in informing the public of the health hazard involved in smoking. A survey showed that 90 per cent of Canadians over the age of 15 are

aware of the issue involved and that 60 per cent were convinced of the hazard.

The significant place of the teenager was demonstrated at the Canadian Youth Conference on Smoking and Health, held in Ottawa in May. Seventy provincially-selected student delegates from every part of Canada prepared to carry the programme into their own areas, and their deliberations and convictions received national attention through the various news media.

National Health Grants totalling \$41 million were made for research projects, hospital construction, home-care programmes, cancer treatment and a wide variety of other health services.

The Emergency Health Services Division, as part of its programme of preparation for peacetime or wartime disasters, has issued packaged emergency units from the National Emergency Medical Stockpile to Canadian municipalities.

### POLLUTION STUDIES

The Public Health Engineering Division has undertaken to participate in pollution studies of the waters of Lake Erie, Lake Ontario and the international section of the St. Lawrence River. Industrial waste studies with the Atlantic Development Board were initiated. They are aimed at an abatement of industrial pollution in Maritime waterways.

### ASSISTANCE PLAN

Initial planning of the Canada Assistance Plan was undertaken. The Plan will provide a framework for federal-provincial co-operation, through a co-ordinated approach to public assistance, to aid those who need the most help. Basically, this new Plan will make available a comprehensive general assistance programme which, while recognizing the various requirements of such groups as the older persons in need, the blind and the disabled, will meet these requirements within one programme and one administrative framework.

### SPORT

An agreement was signed by the Department's Fitness and Amateur Sport Directorate, the province of Manitoba and the city of Winnipeg on sharing costs of the Pan-American Games. The Pan-American Games Society is responsible for the staging of this event in Winnipeg in 1967.

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### YOUNGEST PENSIONERS QUALIFY

Mr. Allan J. MacEachen, Minister of National Health and Welfare, said recently that, at the end of January, 100,000 Canadians would become the first persons aged 69 eligible for the \$75-a-month Old Age Security pension. Throughout 1966 those who reach 69 will become eligible for pension to begin in the month following their birthday.

Legislation to lower the eligible age for Old Age

Security was passed in 1965. The pension was formerly available to persons 70 and over, but the age requirement is being lowered annually by one year. Beginning in January 1967, pension will be paid at age 68, and by 1970, at age 65.

Mr. MacEachen said that an additional \$90 million would be paid in Old Age Security pensions in 1966, bringing the annual total to nearly \$1 billion for more than 1,100,000 recipients.