

h) Control of Cancer Grant : \$3,500,000

Cancer is the second most dangerous killer in Canada. Now, for the first time, a really intensive nation-wide campaign becomes possible for the conquest of this dread disease. An entirely new grant of \$3,500,000 will now be made to assist in the development of all-out provincial programmes. It is designed to make possible the mobilization of the special skills required to give the cancer victim his best hope of recovery, through early diagnosis and expert treatment. This is complementary to, and in no way supplants, the intensive research programmes necessary to find the cause of this dreadful malady.

4. GRANTS FOR HOSPITAL CONSTRUCTION

One of the most pressing health problems that faces Canada today is the urgent shortage of hospital accommodation. In the 1945 Proposals, low-cost loans were put forward to encourage hospital construction. But this problem is now considered so important that more drastic direct action has been planned. To get the results desired, the Dominion Government will now make matching grants to the Provinces, totalling up to \$15,000,000 a year, for a period of at least five years, at which time the needs of the succeeding five year period will be examined and the grants adjusted accordingly.

For the allocation of this and of all the National Health Grants, formulas will be worked out in consultation with the Provinces, but it is expected that the effect of these hospital grants will be to help provide hospital accommodation of more than 40,000 beds.

The information about each provincial health plan that will be collected under the Health Survey Grants will provide a clear picture of provincial hospital needs. By carefully planning the type and location of new hospitals in relation to regional requirements, it will be possible to correct the present maldistribution of hospitals and of medical services - especially as between rural and urban areas. At the present time, the greatest shortages are of hospitals for mental care and chronic and convalescent cases. There are also urgent shortages of hospitals for tuberculosis care and active treatment.

5. HEALTH INSURANCE

The great three-point National Health Programme of the Federal Government that I have outlined does not indicate the immediate beginning of a national hospital and medical care insurance plan, but it does clear the way for that great eventuality. Since 1945, the Department of National Health and Welfare, in its special Division of Health Insurance Studies and its Research Division, has had its own officers and outside specialists working on foundation plans for the formulation of health insurance legislation.

There must be vastly increased hospital accommodation, the entire public health structure must be strengthened and extended, and there must be greatly increased numbers of public health personnel. But everyone who is interested in the advancement of the health levels of our citizens and in clearing the way for a National Health Insurance Plan can now be encouraged by the large-scale and bold health programme that the Federal Government is putting into effect. The eventual implementation of Health Insurance will depend to a great extent on our success in wisely and effectively expending the very considerable Federal monies that now become available.