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THERAPEUTIC ABORTIONS IN CANADA, 1970

This special statement reports on therapeutic abortions performed in Canada during the first full calendar year of authorization under Section 18 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1969.

The statement is based on summary monthly information supplied to DBS by provincial and territorial authorities. The information is believed to be a reasonably complete count of the number of therapeutic abortions performed; only a very few gaps are known to or were reported to DBS.

A summary of the data reported follows.

Canada - Ten provinces and the Yukon Territory reported that hospitals under their jurisdiction performed 11,200 therapeutic abortions during the calendar year 1970.

In terms of rates per 100 live births these 11,200 therapeutic abortions amounted to about 3 per cent of live births. The reported number of therapeutic abortions performed increased every month from a low of 169 in January to 2,252 in December. This represented an increase from less than 1 per cent of live births in January to about 8 per cent in December.

The Provinces - The therapeutic abortion rate for the whole year ranged from a high of about 8 per cent of live births in British Columbia to about 4 per cent in Alberta and Ontario and less than 2 per cent in all other areas.



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The differences between provinces were even greater at year-end. During December therapeutic abortions amounted to about 19 per cent of live births in British Columbia; about 10 per cent of live births in Alberta and Ontario; about 3 to 4 per cent of live births in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Quebec and Nova Scotia; and less than one per cent in New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland.

Residence of Patients - Patients resident within the reporting province accounted for 10,991 therapeutic abortions or 98 per cent of the total reported. One hundred sixty-one abortions, or 1.5 per cent of the total, were reported for persons resident in a province other than the reporting province, and 48 or 0.5 per cent, for persons whose residence was outside Canada.

Further detail is given in Tables 1 to 4. Table 5 shows information regularly published in DBS publications and republished here for ease of reference. Tables 6 to 8 give information on therapeutic abortions for selected countries and for selected states in the U.S.

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Ottawa, 994-5494.

TABLE 1 (A) Therapeutic Abortions by Province and by Months, Canada, 1970
 (B) Percent Distribution of Therapeutic Abortions by Months for Provinces in Canada, 1970

Reporting Province/ Area	January-December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	(A) Number of therapeutic abortions					
														1970	1970	1970	1970	1970	
All reporting areas	11,200	169	245	330	373	517	750	1,014	951	1,214	1,628	1,757	2,252						
Newfoundland	25	1	1	1	1	1	2	3	1	5	4	5	4						
Prince Edward Island	18	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	3	2	1	2	1						
Nova Scotia	263	3	7	9	10	17	21	11	23	36	39	43	44						
New Brunswick	72	1	1	1	5	9	11	8	1	8	10	13	5						
Québec	541	4	8	21	9	6	48	29	29	94	41	55	197						
Ontario	5,657	85	121	176	205	269	404	537	491	535	852	907	1,075						
Manitoba	248	6	8	9	10	14	13	23	9	17	26	35	58						
Saskatchewan	217	4	8	8	8	7	12	20	13	23	30	44	40						
Alberta	1,172	15	26	22	31	57	58	96	99	136	180	187	265						
British Columbia	2,981	49	64	82	94	134	182	285	282	358	445	445	561						
Yukon	6	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1						
(B) Percent distribution of therapeutic abortions by month																			
All reporting areas	100	1	2	3	3	5	7	9	8	11	15	15	16	20					
Newfoundland	100	4	-	4	4	4	-	8	4	20	16	16	20	16					
Prince Edward Island	100	6	11	6	11	-	-	16	16	11	6	11	6	6					
Nova Scotia	100	1	3	3	4	6	8	4	9	14	15	16	17						
New Brunswick	100	1	-	1	7	13	16	11	1	11	14	18	7						
Québec	100	1	2	4	2	1	9	5	5	17	8	10	36						
Ontario	100	2	2	3	4	5	7	9	9	9	15	16	19						
Manitoba	100	2	3	4	4	6	5	9	4	7	11	22	23						
Saskatchewan	100	2	4	4	4	3	5	9	6	11	14	20	18						
Alberta	100	1	2	2	3	5	5	8	8	12	15	16	23						
British Columbia	100	2	2	3	3	4	6	10	9	12	15	15	19						
Yukon	100	-	17	-	17	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	17						

TABLE 2 (A) Therapeutic Abortions by Reporting Province and Residence of Patients, Canada, 1970
 (B) Therapeutic Abortions during each of Twelve Months of the Year 1970 in Canada

Reporting Province/Area	Total therapeutic abortions	(A) Therapeutic abortions to residents of:		
		Same province	Other provinces	Other country(ies)
All reporting areas	11,200	10,991	161	48
Newfoundland	25	25	-	-
Prince Edward Island	18	17	1	-
Nova Scotia	263	261	1	1
New Brunswick	72	72	-	-
Québec	541	534	6	1
Ontario	5,657	5,568	54	35
Manitoba	248	238	10	-
Saskatchewan	217	215	2	-
Alberta	1,172	1,154	18	-
British Columbia	2,981	2,901	69	11
Yukon	6	6	-	-
(B) Therapeutic abortions during each of twelve months of the year 1970 in Canada				
All twelve months (Jan.-Dec./70)	11,200	10,991	161	48
January	169	165	4	-
February	245	245	-	-
March	330	326	3	1
April	373	370	3	-
May	517	504	6	7
June	750	729	10	11
July	1,014	979	21	14
August	951	921	22	8
September	1,214	1,187	26	1
October	1,628	1,604	23	1
November	1,757	1,733	23	1
December	2,252	2,228	20	4

Table 3. (A) Therapeutic abortions, registered live births and abortion rates per 100 live births by province in Canada during 1970.

(B) Therapeutic abortions, registered live births and abortion rates per 100 live births in Canada by months during 1970.

Reporting Province/Area	Therapeutic Abortions	Live Births registered	Abortion Rate per 100 live Births
(A) Therapeutic Abortions and rates by province			
All reporting areas	11,152	368,431	3.0
Newfoundland	25	13,000	0.2
Prince Edward Island	17	2,009	0.8
Nova Scotia	261	13,618	1.9
New Brunswick	72	11,695	0.6
Quebec	534	95,610	0.6
Ontario	5,568	130,398	4.3
Manitoba	238	17,809	1.3
Saskatchewan	215	17,592	1.2
Alberta	1,154	30,855	3.7
British Columbia	2,901	35,383	8.2
Yukon Territory	6	462	1.3
(B) Therapeutic Abortions and rates by month			
January-December, 1970	11,152	368,431	3.0
January	169	29,814	0.6
February	245	27,670	0.9
March	329	31,998	1.0
April	373	31,337	1.2
May	510	33,359	1.5
June	739	31,535	2.3
July	1,000	32,172	3.1
August	943	31,079	3.0
September	1,213	31,452	3.9
October	1,627	30,210	5.4
November	1,756	28,424	6.2
December	2,248	29,381	7.6

Notes: The registered live births relate to the calendar year 1969. Final figures of live births for the year 1970 are not available.

The number of therapeutic abortions for "All reporting areas" does not include figures for patients from other countries. Similarly the number of therapeutic abortions for individual provinces relate only to the residents of the province.

Table 4. Therapeutic Abortion Rates (per 100 Live Births) by Province in Each Calendar Month of the year 1970 in Canada

Reporting Province/Area	Jan.-Dec. 1970	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
All reporting areas	3.0	0.6	0.9	1.0	1.2	1.5	2.3	3.1	3.0	3.9	5.4	6.2	7.6
Newfoundland	0.2	0.1	-	0.1	0.1	0.1	-	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.4
Prince Edward Island	0.8	-	1.3	0.6	-	1.1	-	1.8	1.8	1.3	0.7	1.2	0.5
Nova Scotia	1.9	0.3	0.7	0.8	0.9	1.4	1.8	0.9	1.8	3.0	3.8	4.2	4.0
New Brunswick	0.6	0.1	-	0.1	0.5	0.6	1.1	0.8	0.1	0.8	1.0	1.5	0.5
Québec	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.6	0.4	0.4	1.2	0.5	0.8	2.8
Ontario	4.3	0.8	1.3	1.6	1.9	2.3	3.5	4.5	4.4	4.7	7.6	8.7	9.8
Manitoba	1.3	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.9	0.7	1.4	0.6	1.2	1.8	3.5	4.0
Saskatchewan	1.2	0.3	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.8	1.3	0.9	1.5	2.1	3.4	2.9	-
Alberta	3.7	0.6	1.2	2.1	2.1	3.4	3.7	5.2	7.3	7.4	10.5	-	-
British Columbia	8.2	1.7	2.4	2.5	3.0	4.1	6.3	8.9	9.0	11.3	14.5	16.2	18.9
Yukon	1.3	-	2.2	-	2.7	3.0	-	-	-	-	3.3	4.8	-

Table 5. Registered Female deaths in Canada, 1965-69

Item	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
a) Female deaths, all ages, all causes	61,731	61,950	61,983	63,662	64,241
b) Deaths, females age 15-49, all causes	5,629	5,779	5,791	5,860	6,143
c) Deaths, females, from deliveries and compli- cations of pregnancy, i childbirth and the puerperium - all ages...	135	135	88	99	77
d) Deaths, females, from abortions - all ages	14	13	8	13	13
(I) induced for medical or legal indication ..	-	-	-	3	-
(II) induced for other reasons (criminal; induced without medical or legal indication; self induced)	9	9	4	6	11
(III) spontaneous or unspecified and other.	5	4	4	4	2

Table 6. (A) Live birth rates per 1000 population for
selected countries, 1963 to 1967.(B) Abortion rates per 100 live births for the
selected countries, 1963-1967.

Country	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967
(A) Live birth rate (Live births per 1000 persons)					
1. Bulgaria	16.4	16.1	15.3	14.9	15.0
2. Czechoslovakia	16.9	17.2	16.4	15.6	15.1
3. Denmark	17.6	17.7	18.0	18.4	16.8
4. Hungary	13.1	13.0	13.1	13.6	14.6
5. Japan	17.3	17.7	18.5	-	19.3
6. Poland	19.2	18.1	17.3	16.7	16.3
(B) Abortion rate (Abortions per 100 live births)					
1. Bulgaria	63	69	75	76	79
2. Czechoslovakia	30	29	35	40	44
3. Denmark	4	5	6	6	8
4. Hungary	131	140	136	135	126
5. Japan	57	51	46	-	38
6. Poland	33	32	42	42	N.A.

Note: (i) Source of information is: Abortion-Law, choice and morality by Daniel Callahan.

(ii) Comparable information for Japan for the year 1966 is not available.

(iii) N.A. — not available.



Table 7. Abortion rates (Abortions per 100 live births) for the latest available year for selected countries/areas in the world

Country/Area	Period	Abortion rate per 100 live births
1. England and Wales	1968	4.6
2. East Germany	1967	8.0 (Estimated)
3. Greece	1966-67	34.1
4. Rumania	1965	40.1
5. Yugoslavia	1964	37.0
6. U.S.A.		
(a) California	Jan.-Sept. 1970	13.5
(b) Colorado	1969	2.5
(c) Georgia	1969	2.0
(d) Oregon	N.A.	16.5
(e) Maryland	1969-70	4.3
(f) Hawaii	March-July, 1970	19.2

Notes - (i) 1. Source of information is: Lancet, Feb. 7, 1970.
(ii) 2-5 " " " " : Abortion - Law, choice and morality by Daniel Callahan.
(iii) 6. " " " " : Reports from concerned state organizations and American Journals of Public Health for February and March, 1971.

Table 8. Per cent distribution of induced abortions by ages of women for selected countries.

Period of Reference	Under 20 yrs.	40 yrs. and over				
		20-24 yrs.	25-29 yrs.	30-34 yrs.	35-39 yrs.	
England and Wales ... (U.K.)	Apr. 68-Dec. 68	17	28	18	15	13 9
Japan	1968	2	18	27	27	18 8
Sweden	1966	19	23	17	17	15 9
<u>U.S.A.</u>						
Georgia	1968 June 1970	25	23	26	13	9 5
New York City	July-December 70	22	38	19	11	7 3

Source of Information: (i) For England & Wales - statistical reviews of England & Wales for the yr. 1968 (supplement on Abortions)
(ii) For Japan & Sweden - Abortion-Law choice and Morality by Daniel Callahan.
(iii) For New York City - report of city Health Dept. for Georgia - American Journal of Public Health for March, 1971.

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