With the coming of the depression in 1929, new hospital c tion practically ceased. More than 700 hospitals were unable find sufficient operating funds and were forced to close. World War II hospital construction remained at minimum. lowing the war, growing demands and increasing shortages national attention on the need for hospital facilities as a maj of postwar planning. In October 1944, a Commission on Care was organized under the sponsorship of the Public Healt and the American Hospital Association, to study hospital The direct outgrowth was the enactment of the Hospital Survey Construction Act (Hill-Burton) in August 1946 as title VI of Public Health Service Act. The purposes of the program th lished were twofold:

1. To assist States in inventorying existing facilities as a basis determining their need for additional facilities and for de comprehensive plans for construction of needed facilities, and

2. To provide the necessary incentive, through Federal assistance to the States, for constructing long-needed public and nonprofit hospitals, public health centers, and related hospi ties—particularly in rural areas.

The availability of modern hospital facilities has helped to physicians, including specialists, to relatively isolated areas; and ratio of physicians to population in these areas as a whole has fairly constant in recent years. Today the general hospital nized as the focal point of community health, the training gr health personnel, and a center for medical research. Neve in some areas and particularly in metropolitan centers, the plant is outmoded, poorly located, and sorely in need of re or replacement.

Physical characteristics of general hospitals are not readily to generalization. Little comparison can be made between one-story 20-bed hospital on the outskirts of a small town and 500-bed multistoried and multistructured teaching hospital in State's largest city. Of necessity the small rural hospital is not to have the variety of medical skills, costly equipment and sp facilities of the large urban hospital.

Today's general hospitals range widely in size and services p depending upon location, number of persons to be served, and availability of other health facilities. The average size of a hospital is about 125 beds, of which 85 are medical-surgical, 2 rical, and 15 pediatric. Basic services and departments include blood bank, central supply, clinical laboratory, elect graph, medical record department, outpatient and emergency ments, pharmacy, X-ray diagnosis, operating rooms, deliver postoperative recovery room, medical library, premature and a physical therapy department.

As hospitals increase in size, the variety and types of services vided increase correspondingly. For example, the 400-bed may consist of a number of wings, units, or separate buildings provide, in addition to the services listed above, the following or departments: cancer clinic, dental department, medical service department, X-ray therapy, school of nursing, ra isotope facility, electroencephalograph, and a psychiatric unit.