

*lection unit shall have due regard for the financial means or abilities of the patient, or the person or persons legally responsible for the patient's maintenance and support, and whenever deemed necessary, may agree to accept a periodic sum for the patient's maintenance less than the per capita cost. Upon failure of a patient or other legally responsible person to make payment or enter into an agreement to make payment, the collection unit shall notify the Attorney General and he shall institute proceedings on behalf of the unit for collection thereof with authority to make adjustment or settlements of said claims as he feels to be in the best interest of the State.*

**[(c)]** *(d) How payments made and collected; distribution. All payments required to be made under the provisions of this section shall be made to and collected by the [county treasurer or treasurer of Baltimore, as the case may be, who] collection unit, and shall [account for same. Any amounts so collected shall first be applied against the seventy-five cents (75¢) per day which the county or Baltimore City are required to pay. Any amount collected over and above seventy-five cents (75¢) per day from or on account of any patient shall be paid by the county or Baltimore City to the State Treasurer] be accounted for and paid by the collection unit into the general funds of the State Treasury, according to the procedure in effect for such accounting.*

**[(d)]** *(e) Claims against estate of deceased patient. Upon the death of any person admitted to any chronic hospital, the [county commissioners or the department of welfare of Baltimore City, as the case may be,] collection unit shall be entitled to make claim against the estate of any such person for his or her care while in such hospital, or for the balance due therefor if part has been paid. A CLAIM UNDER THIS SUBSECTION SHALL NOT INCLUDE ANY CHARGE FOR SUCH CARE FOR A PERIOD LONGER THAN THREE YEARS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THE DEATH OF SUCH PATIENT; EXCEPT THAT IF ANY RELATIVE LIABLE FOR SUCH PATIENT'S CARE IN ANY SUCH HOSPITAL HAS MISREPRESENTED ASSETS OR SUBMITTED FRAUDULENT INFORMATION, AND BY SO DOING HAS AVOIDED SUCH A CLAIM OR PART OF SUCH A CLAIM FOR THE PATIENT'S CARE, THERE SHALL BE A PERIOD OF LIMITATIONS OF SIX YEARS ON THE CLAIM AGAINST THE ESTATE. Such claim shall be a preferred claim against the estate of any such person, and all claims arising hereunder against the relatives and other persons legally chargeable with the care of such person, shall also constitute preferred claims. All such claims may be waived, however, by the [county welfare boards or department of welfare of Baltimore City, as the case may be,] collection unit in [their] its discretion, if in [their] its judgment the enforcement of the same will result in hardship to others, dependent upon those against whom such claims exist. All payments received as a result of the enforcement of such claims shall be accounted for and paid as hereinbefore provided. The collection unit shall credit the account of each county, for any patient, with any amounts actually collected and received by the unit from or for that patient, whether received from himself, his relatives, others legally chargeable with his maintenance and support or others; the credit allowed to the county in any one year, for any one patient, is not to exceed the amount paid by the county for that patient's maintenance and support. It shall be the duty of the collection unit to furnish to the county commissioners or*