

26 December 2014

Development of health technology assessment and its decision-making process

The 7th National Health Assembly,

Having considered the report on “Development of health technology assessment and its decision-making process”¹;

Acknowledging and realizing that the country’s health spending has increased, with part of the spending used on health technology that doesn’t have any benefits, so that rational decision-making is needed to ensure maximum efficiency in health investments and proper access by the public to the beneficial health technologies and services, which requires technical evidence and information including high-quality health technology assessments, through a recognized and accepted technical standard that is fair, with a transparent decision-making process acceptable to all sectors and allowing all eligible stakeholders including the general public to participate in the process at all times;

Concerned that health technology assessments are conducted and scattered across several institutes/agencies, without any guarantee of financial sustainability as the budget comes from various sources, resulting in the prioritization of work from the funders rather than meeting the needs of the country, that a majority of policymakers and personnel who should consider the assessment results as part of their decision to use health technology at the national level, hospital level, and practitioner level still do not have adequate understanding about the assessment, and that the assessors themselves still lack suitability and expertise, which may make their assessments unlikely to be used for decision-making purposes;

Appreciating the efforts made by various agencies in Thailand to address the problem of inappropriate use of health technology on a regular basis through the setting up of agencies or programs to undertake health technology assessments;

Seeing that the country should develop a general health technology assessment system to ensure that there is evidence or information based on scientific research or analysis for use in public policy decisions and choosing health technologies, thus making

¹ Document Health Assembly 7/Main 3

the allocation of budgets and national resources effective and equitable, taking into consideration the impacts from public policy and use of technology, including medical, health, economic, social, ethical and/or practical considerations;

Has, therefore, passed the following resolutions:

1. Requesting the Ministry of Public Health to set up a committee for the development of health technology assessment at the national level consisting of representatives from the sectors concerned² such as policymakers, medical experts, academics, people from industry, representatives from patients' organizations, whether formal and informal, from the three health funds³, civil society and the general public. The committee is to undertake the following activities:

1.1 To develop a health technology assessment system, ranging from studying and summarizing past problems, questions for assessments, the assessment process, policy decisions, and disclosure of information under consideration to post-assessment actions including developing guidelines, methods, requirements, and tools, which is at a standard recognized by various national agencies in order to form the basis for quality, transparent, equitable, and accountable health technology assessments for the Thai health system;

1.2 To develop the health technology assessment potential and capabilities of partner networks, including researchers, health professional organizations, research agencies, health education institutes, and health clinics/hospitals so that they can undertake health technology assessments and obtain basic information needed to determine whether the assessments meet standards in the Thai context;

1.3 To establish a national center designed to collect and offer services on health technology assessment data and utilizing it in a useful manner, and assessment findings or their applications at both national and international levels. The center will also disseminate and publicize the information, as well as serving as a study center for the general public and interested parties through various channels of access;

1.4 To provide correct knowledge and understanding regarding factors in choosing appropriate health technologies through using health technology assessments for decision-makers, health personnel, and other groups of people that may benefit from

² For instance, the National List of Essential Medicines Subcommittee, the Food and Drug Administration, the Benefit Package and Service System Development Subcommittee, the National Health Security Office/Comptroller-General's Department/Social Security Office, agencies undertaking health technology assessments, the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers Association/Thai Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association/Thai Medical Device Technology Industry Association, health personnel and professional agencies such as physicians, nurses, and pharmacists, Thai traditional medical practitioners, and alternative medical practitioners including royal colleges and non-profit independent organizations such as the Consumer Protection Foundation, patients' groups, groups of people with disabilities, groups of community organizations, and media.

³ These are the Civil Servants Medical Benefit Scheme, the Social Security Fund, and the Universal Health Coverage Fund.

such assessments, including mass media, the general public, and specific target groups such as people with hearing and vision disabilities;

1.5 To coordinate in order to create a researcher network between organizations/individuals undertaking health technology assessments and other related research agencies, health education institutes, health professional bodies, non-profit and for-profit NGOs, and other domestic and international organizations managing research activities in support of research funds. The work will also expand the potential of the network by monitoring researcher and research quality;

2. Requesting the Ministry of Public Health, with approval of the National Health Technology Assessment System Development Committee, to set up an agency to develop a national health technology assessment system with participation from all sectors concerned;

3. Requesting the National Health Security Office to act as lead agency in conjunction with the Ministry of Public Health, the Social Security Office, and the Comptroller-General's Department, including every agency that has a role in determining benefits, and requesting the representatives of the Health Assembly to participate in the development of the benefit package and decision-making framework by making use of the information derived from health technology assessments and working with stakeholders from all sectors in considering factors in addition to cost-effectiveness in light of the context and role of each agency concerned;

4. Requesting members of the National Health Assembly and other networks to monitor, study, and make efforts to understand the processes and decisions involved in the assessment and use of health technology, including providing cooperation on research or collection of data under their jurisdiction;

5. Requesting education institutes offering health education to develop curriculums with contents on health technology assessments, decisions on choosing health technologies, and the application of the assessment data;

6. Requesting research-supporting agencies such as the National Research Council, the Thailand Research Fund, the Health Systems Research Institute, the Thai Health Promotion Foundation, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Education, and universities to support research on health technology assessments;

7. Requesting the Secretary-General of the National Health Commission to make a progress report to the 8th and 9th National Health Assemblies.