

Access to Occupational Health Services for Health and Safety of Workers in Industrial and Service Sectors

The Fourth National health Assembly,

Having considered the report on Access to Occupational Health Services for Health and Safety of Workers in the Industrial and Service Sectors,

Recognizing that economic expansion in the industrial and service sectors without regard to negative impact on workers' health and safety results in injuries, disabilities and deaths of a large number of workers;

Recognizing that access to occupational health services for health and safety of workers is a basic right and a provision of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, B.E. 2550; the Occupational Safety, Health and Environment Act, B.E. 2554, Medical Care Establishment Act B.E. 2541 and several other laws including conventions of the International Labour Organization;

Acknowledging that the government has made the workers safety and health policy a national agenda since 11 December 2007;

Recognizing that, to resolve this problem, consideration must be given to participation of all the parties involved (government agencies, employer organizations; entrepreneurs, employee organizations, labour unions and workers) and a safety culture must be cultivated in these organizations;

Acknowledging that workers in the industrial and service sectors are entitled to occupational health services for their health and safety, but that most workers still have problems gaining access to such services due to several factors, especially substandard and inadequate assessments of exposure at work, health risk assessments and occupational medicine;

The NHA, therefore resolves that:

1. The Ministry of Labour shall be the key agency in implementing the following:

1.1 Expedite the implementation of provisions of section 3, paragraph 2, of the Occupational Safety, Health, and Environment Act. B.E. 2554, which stipulates that the central administration, regional provincial administration, local government administration and other enterprises designated in the prescribed ministerial regulations shall have in place occupational

health, safety and environment standards at their respective agencies at least equivalent to those set forth under this Act.

1.2 Collaborate with workers networks, employer organizations, and other associated networks such as the Thai Health Promotion Foundation, the National Health Security Office, educational institutions that produce/train occupational health and safety personnel, the Ministries of Industry, Education and Public Health, local administration organizations at all levels, the Occupational Health and Safety Association (Thailand) and other relevant professional associations to develop an occupational health and safety model that will lead to “safety culture” at work places.

1.3 Collaborate with the Ministry of Public Health and relevant networks and agencies to prepare and develop guidelines and standards on OHS, regarding the following matters:

1.3.1 Quality control of occupational health services of the private and public sectors;

1.3.2 A guideline for inspections and assessments of occupational exposure;

1.3.3 A guideline for workers’ health examinations based on risk factors;

1.3.4 Occupational health and safety information system.

1.4 Allocate funding from interest earnings of the Workmen’s Compensation Fund to support provision of occupational health services that are of quality standard and comprehensive so that small and medium enterprises will have the capacity to help their workers to gain access to these services in accordance with section 28, paragraph 2 of the Workmen’s Compensation Act, B.E. 2537 (1994)

1.5 Collaborate with the Ministry of Public Health and related agencies to set up a process to receive opinions, review information, and make preparations to consider the appropriateness in ratifying ILO conventions listed below that are essential for occupational health and safety services, i.e.

- No. 155, the Safety and Occupational Health Convention, 1981 (B.E. 2524)

- No.161, the Occupational Health Services Convention 1985 (B.E. 2528)

- No. 187, the Convention on the Framework for Promotion of Safety at Work and Occupational Health 2006 (B.E. 2549)

1.6 Together with the Ministry of Public health and related agencies, review and improve laws and regulations connected with health services within the enterprises so that it will be of high quality and in congruence with, for example, Ministry of Public Health Notice no. 4 (1999) on exemptions for medical care establishments that do not have to be under the Medical Care Establishments Act B.E. 2541, and under the Ministerial Regulation on Arranging for Welfare in Enterprises B.E. 2548 (the latter which is in accordance with the Labour Protection Act B.E. 2541

2. Request the Institute for Promotion of Occupational Safety, Health, and Environment, in its capacity as a public organization established under the Occupational Safety, Health, and Environment Act, B.E. 2554 (2011) to support the strong development of labour organizations and

civil society to serve as mechanisms to promote greater access to the right to occupational health services.

3. Request the Ministry of Public Health, by the Disease Control Department and the Health Department, to be the key agency to implement the following:

3.1 Develop a model for occupational health and occupational medicine services that are comprehensive and easily accessible;

3.2 Prepare and develop guidelines to prevent threats to and promote health. Also, to improve the diagnosis, cure and rehabilitation of those having health problems arising from work.

3.3 Support or cooperate with universities and related professional organizations to develop occupational health personnel, industrial health personnel, occupational health doctors, occupational health nurses, officers legally mandated to work on occupational safety and relevant public health personnel to have the knowledge and ability to perform their duties in monitoring occupational environment and health.

4. Request that the National Health Security Office allocate additional health budget for those working people unable to access health care services from other funds.

5. Request that the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Industry enforce the currently laws vigorously, and also ask that the women's networks and labour networks that are connected with work on occupational health and safety for workers monitor the results of the Ministries' work and report progress to the 5th National Health Assembly.