

**Developing Traditional Thai Medicine, Folk Medicine and Alternative Medicine as the Country's Major Health System Parallel to Conventional Medicine**

The Second National Health Assembly;

Having considered the report "Developing Traditional Thai Medicine, Folk Medicine and Alternative Medicine as the Country's Major Health System Parallel to Conventional Medicine";

*Acknowledging* that the concept of having Thai traditional medicine, folk medicine, and alternative medicine as major health care system of the country alongside with conventional medicine means developing the health management system in terms of budgeting, resource allocation, finding personnel and allocating them, adjusting the medicine and patient service system, so that all three types of medicine cited above can be developed in tandem with or integrated with the system of conventional medicine. This will result in a broad usage of the public health system, and the people will be able to access all models of medical care equally;

*Realizing* the NHA 2008 resolution 1.2 "Universal Access to Medicines", strategy 4, no. 4.1 (support on production of essential medicines, raw material for medicinal production, and production of herbal medicines)

*Appreciative and accepting* the potential and role of Thai traditional medicine, folk medicine, and alternative medicine in the health care system, which indicates that these traditional forms are ready to an extent to contribute the health care of the people. If such forms are given systemic and continuing support to develop in matters of quality and standards, then their potential can be fully realized;

*Acknowledging and being pleased* with the current effort to establish Thai traditional medicine model hospitals, which is a target in the first Statute on National Health System B.E. 2552 (2009), and also gratified that the Chiangrai Rajabhat University, Rajamangala University of Technology Isan, and the Department for Development of Thai Traditional and Alternative Medicine have agreed to offer their premises for such hospitals, for training of personnel, for study and research;

*Concerned* about the yearly increase in the number of licensed Thai traditional medicine practitioners but without vacant positions to absorb them, especially in the public sector; about the lack of strictness in controlling the behavior and practice of personnel so as to maintain standards set by the law; about enforcement of the law with regards to non-Thai traditional medical practitioners posing as such; about the problem of control of the sale of Thai medicine and health products produced from herbs in a way that exaggerates their curative properties which in the end will generally affect Thai traditional medicine negatively;

Hereby issues the following resolutions:

1. Requesting the National Committee for the Development of Local Wisdom in Health and the Department for Development of Thai Traditional and Alternative Medicines as a key organization together with relevant agencies from government, academics and civil sectors to move forward according to the Statute on the National Health System 2009 Chapter 7 as follows:

1.1 Establish a provincial mechanism - whose composition shall include traditional doctors, Thai traditional doctors, local administrative organizations, related agencies and civil societies - to promote, support and develop skills and capability of traditional doctors on providing healthcare services to people in their communities.

1.2 Support be given to local government organizations at all levels in cooperation with relevant agencies and civil societies to:

1.2.1 provide supports to groups and networks of traditional doctors in order to form traditional medicine councils. This would provide a forum and mechanism for learning and exchange of knowledge, for continuing the fine tradition of knowledge of our forefathers so that it is kept alive in the community. The aims are to strengthen the Thai way to health and promote a Thai way of life that has varied roots, all to reach the goal of development of a self-reliant health system and consumer protection system;

1.2.2 prepare a plan to develop and promote local wisdom in health, Thai traditional medicine, folk medicine, and alternative medicine. Also, there needs to be an allocation of part of the annual budget with a decision made by participatory process.

1.3 Promote groupings and networks of Thai traditional medical practitioners, which comprise those who work in the four types of Thai traditional medicine i.e. Thai medical treatment, Thai pharmaceuticals, Thai traditional midwifery, and Thai massage by studying a possibility in an establishment of a Thai traditional medicine practitioner's council. This council will have the role and responsibility in promoting and controlling Thai traditional medicine practitioners so that they adhere to standards of health professional and consumer protection.

1.4 Support be given to relevant agencies to:

1.4.1 Establish a mechanism to study the feasibility of issuing a law on Thai medicine and Thai herbal medicine in order to promote its use.

1.4.2 Prepare an operations plan, with a supporting budget, to develop 100 formulations for Thai medicinal products and drugs derived from herbs within a 3 year period.

1.4.3 Coordinate with the Committee for National Drug System Development to review its committee composition and to review its consideration process in order to add at least 20 Thai traditional and herbal medicines items into the Essential Drug List within 3 years

1.4.4 Urging an establishment of health service system of traditional Thai medicine, folk medicine and alternative medicine in public and private health care units/institutes/hospitals in parallel with modern medicine. Communities shall be supported for their participation in the development of health service and referring system. All health insurance schemes (social security scheme, civil service benefit scheme, universal coverage scheme, etc.) shall be provided for people at all levels.

1.4.5 Coordinate with the Committee for Policy Implementation at Sub-district (Tambon) Health Promotion Hospitals to establish a system to support health promotion hospitals at the sub-district level (or Tambon) so as to have a system

whereby Thai traditional medicine and folk medicine are offered in parallel with conventional medicine. This is to be done by participation of the community.

1.4.6 Request Local Administrative Organizations to be a focal point in drafting a plan with continuous participation of networks of traditional Thai medicine practitioners, folk healers, monks and related NGOs aiming for the setting up of prototype traditional Thai medicine hospitals in 4 regions (at least 1 hospital per each region). This is to develop the traditional Thai medicine, folk medicine and alternative medicine as the country's major health system parallel to modern medicine

1.4.7 Request the Medical Registration Division and the Traditional Thai Medicine Professional Committee to:

1) publicize laws, professional standard criteria for Thai traditional medicines practitioners and regulations related to its curricula and registration of professionals in order to raise public understanding and awareness on the existing Thai traditional medicines which could lead to a development in Thai traditional medical system.

2) review and change the registration exam for Thai medicine practitioners to be complied with its context, wisdom and various fields of specialty.

2. Request that the Secretary-General of the National Health Commission report on problems, obstacles, and ways to overcome them to the Fourth National Health Assembly.

