

Promoting Early Childhood Wellbeing with a Participatory Integrated Approach

The 9th National Health Assembly,

Having considered the report on "Promoting Early Childhood Wellbeing with a Participatory Integrated Approach"¹,

Noting that early childhood refers to a period from birth to six years old and includes the prenatal development period and that these first years of life are crucial to the fundamental quality development of the child's life and potentials;

Realizing that promotion of early childhood wellbeing must begin from before birth, by seeing to it that women with or before pregnancy are provided with good nutrition and feed their children with breastfeeding including other nutrient, safe food in the appropriate amount and in multiple forms appropriate to the social and cultural context of the locality, including important medicinal food supplements such as iodine, iron and folic acid, that appropriate parenting should be multi-dimensional in such forms as hugging, playing, reading activities appropriate to the child's age, positive disciplined training, safe environment appropriate to local identity, strengthening of disease immunity appropriate to the children's age and conducive to their growth, learning and physical and mental development to ensure their full development potentials in physical, mental, spiritual, social and linguistic dimensions;

Concerned that the parents and care givers still do not have adequate knowledge and understanding about early child care, as more than half of the Thai children are at risk of facing or having nutrition problems such as nutrient deficiency, obesity, development inappropriate to the child age and inappropriate behavior, leading to adverse health impacts, low work productivity, lower income, and higher health costs affecting the country's economy and development, and that many Thai children are known to have been injured, abandoned, abused or have even lost their lives and lack opportunity to get access to necessary service and welfare system;

Seeing that the promotion of early childhood wellbeing requires implementation by organizations and networks at family, community and society levels, through coordination of agencies and networks ranging from local to provincial levels, including people oriented health regions, turning the issue into a public policy with common action guidelines and goals based on the integrated approach and participation from all sectors, and that there must be follow-up and evaluation on a regular basis together with performance reports from all participating agencies;

Aware that the National Child and Youth Development Commission (NCYDC) as a national mechanism and Provincial/Bangkok Early Childhood Development Sub-committees as provincial mechanisms have played an important role in advocating and implementing early childhood wellbeing on a continuing basis through the participation of agencies, organizations and networks concerned;

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Seeing that local government organizations, public agencies, academic networks, the private sector, and civil society all work to promote early childhood wellbeing for each individual child and to manage environmental determinants of child wellbeing;

Realizing that the implementation of the work plans/strategies related to early childhood entails supervision, follow-up and evaluation in a clear manner to reach the goal of early childhood development in physical, mental, spiritual, social and linguistic dimensions through the creation and proper management of knowledge and social communications;

Appreciating the principles enshrined in the 2nd Statute on National Health System about the public policy development process integrating the concept of "Health in All Policies" in a concrete manner, mobilizing the potentials of all sectors at every level to implement the policy of provincial/issue-specific health assemblies, to create local health charters, and to support the work of partner networks in light of National Health Assembly Resolution 7.1 on Policy Development to Integrate the Mechanisms for Protection of Children, Youth, and Family from Risk Factors;

Hereby passes the following resolutions:

1. Requesting the National Child and Youth Development Commission (NCYDC) to take the following actions:

1.1 To promote, monitor and see to it that pregnant women and young children receive all the benefits in line with the policy and guidelines set in the Draft Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E... (version approved by the referendum held in 2016), in particular the benefits concerning promotion of early childhood wellbeing

1.2 To make sure that provincial health assembly networks sit on the Bangkok/provincial subcommittees on early childhood development,

1.3 To seek ways and means to encourage the participation of the private sector in promoting early childhood wellbeing;

2. Requesting the provincial health assembly networks to do the following:

2.1 To work with the Bangkok/provincial subcommittees on early childhood development to support the operation in the target areas in the promotion of early childhood wellbeing

2.2 To coordinate and advocate the issue of promoting early childhood wellbeing to be part of the local health charters;

3. Requesting the Ministry of Public Health by way of the Department of Health to act as lead agency, together with the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Office of the Prime Minister, Department of Public Relations, Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, National Health Security Office (NHSO), Thai Health Promotion Foundation (ThaiHealth), related agencies and networks from the public and private sectors to do the following:

3.1 To prepare work guidelines for promoting early childhood wellbeing, covering such issues as capacity building for personnel, service facilities, and knowledge, and get the work done within one year

3.2 To develop tools designed to collect information on individual young children in an integrated manner covering health, growth and development that can be applied and used as referral between families, health facilities, and early childhood development centers on a regular basis, and as a basis for further child development of school age,

3.3 To implement, monitor and assess the guidelines in 3.1-3.2 in a concrete manner;

4. Requesting local government organizations to support the policy, work plans, and measures by encouraging participation from the family, community, academic sector, civil society, and the private sector, using available local budget and resources such as local/area health security funds and any other fund to promote early childhood wellbeing in the locality and manage determinants of early childhood health;

5. Requesting Thai Health Promotion Foundation (ThaiHealth) to act as lead agency, together with the National Health Security Office (NHSO), Office of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC), Department of Public Relations, and other agencies concerned in the mainstream media, public and local media, to communicate and create public awareness about the importance and participation in the promotion of early childhood wellbeing;

6. Requesting the Health Systems Research Institute (HSRI) to act as lead agency, together with other research agencies concerned, education institutes, and other agencies concerned, to support and conduct studies on the promotion of early childhood wellbeing, integrating all the participatory effort to ensure proper application;

7. Requesting the Secretary-General of the National Health Commission to report the progress to the 11th National Health Assembly.