

Chapter 7

Protection of Thailand's Health System

A good health system must be based on morality, righteousness and ethical conduct with respect for rights, values and dignity of human being, leading to equality. Besides, the system must have a complete structure and interrelated/coordinated working mechanisms in an integrated manner, with good quality, efficiency, cost-containment, accountability, and joint responsibility as well as unity, knowledge base, continued learning and development, in line with personal ways of life and social norms, self-reliance in a suitable and sustainable manner and participation of all sectors in society for promoting health of all the people, i.e. "all for health and health for all".

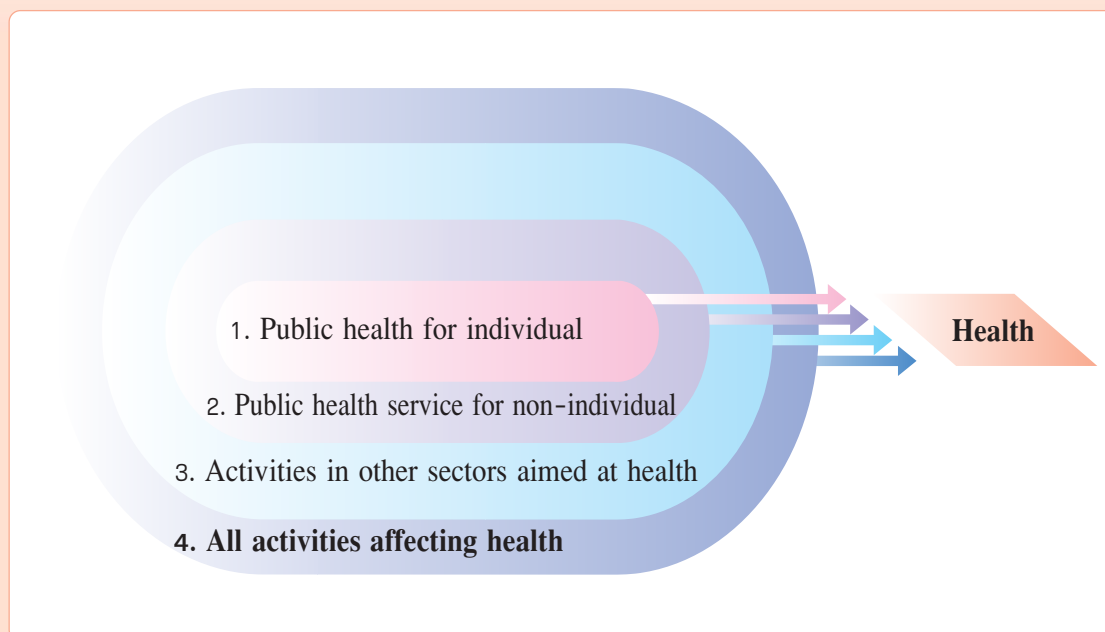
1. Scope of the National Health System

According to the National Health Act B.E. 2550 (2007) (Government Gazette, Vol. 124, Part 16Gor, 19 March B.E. 2550), **"health means the state of human being which is perfect in physical, mental, intellectual and social aspects, all of which are holistic in balance,"** and "health system means overall relations in connection with health."

"Public health system" means the management of activities related to disease prevention, curative care, health promotion and medical rehabilitation (Public Health Encyclopedia, 1988) and **"public health service"** means any service relating to health promotion, prevention and control of diseases and health hazards, diagnosis and treatment of illness and rehabilitation of person, family and community.

In summary, the "national health system" means various systems that cover the operations of health activities in all dimensions, while the public health system and the public service system are part of the national health system, as diagrammatically shown in the figure below.

Figure 7.1 Scope and meaning of health system



Source: National Health Act, B.E. 2550 (2007).

According to the figure above, the scope of health system can be described in four levels as follows:

Level 1: This is the narrowest level of health system which covers health services for individuals with respect to curative care, health promotion, disease prevention and rehabilitation.

Level 2: This level covers services outside the individuals such as disease prevention in the community, family and community health, but does not include other health-related activities such as water supply, sanitation, and legislation on reduction of lead content in fuels.

Level 3: This level covers activities of other sectors which are related to health such as solid waste disposal, water supply and road safety.

Level 4: This is the widest level that covers all activities that may have some effects on health, no matter whether they will have any health-related objectives or not, such as education, tourism, agriculture, city planning, justice, economy, etc.

The “Total health system” in the National Health Act covers all activities as described in “Level 4” above, while the public health system is a sub-system of the health system that covers activities in “Levels 1, 2 and 3”, and “health care/service system” covers Level 1 activities and some activities of Level 2 such as family and community health.