

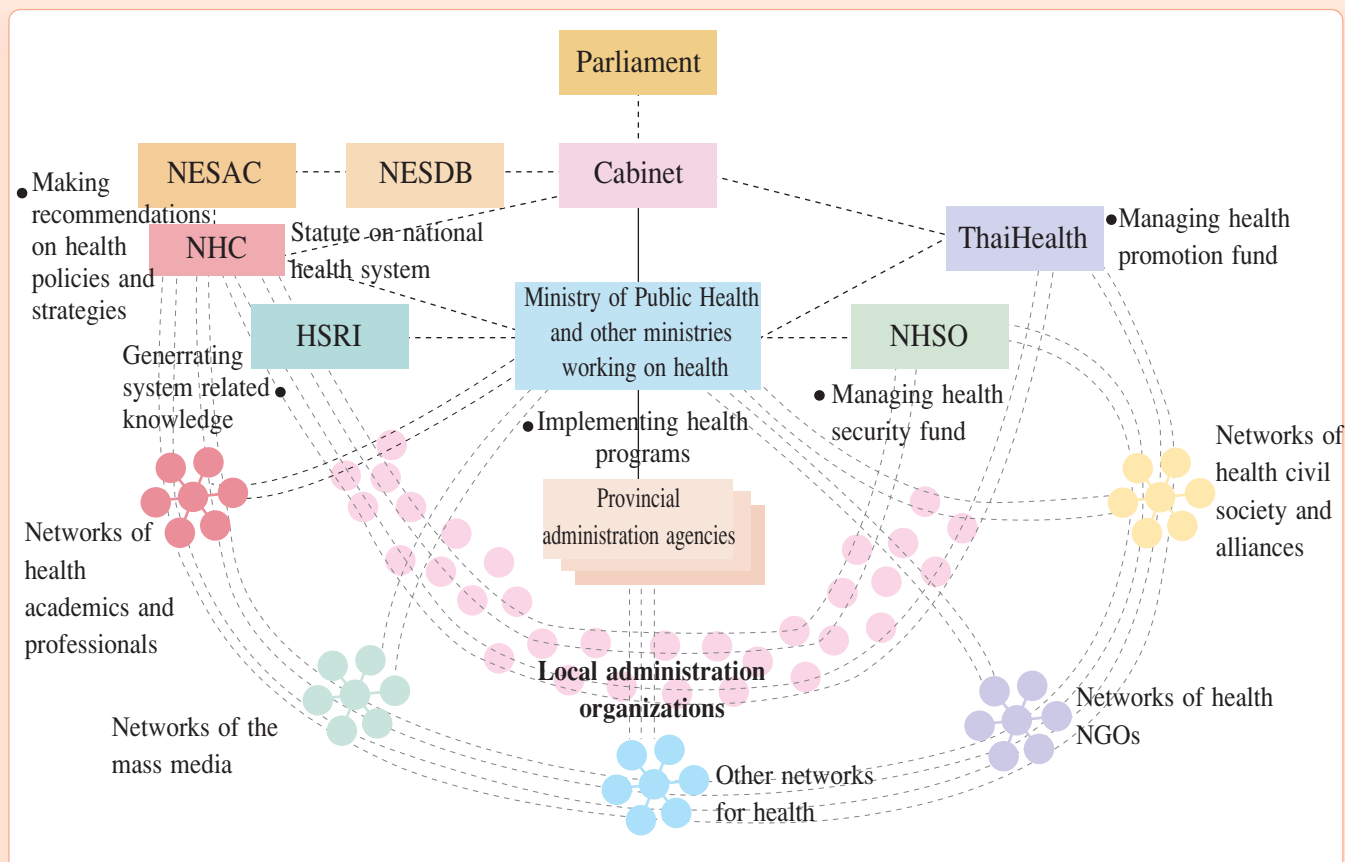


3. Mechanism for Protection of National Health System

In the past, when mentioning of mechanisms for the protection of the national health system, they were normally referred to mechanisms under the Ministry of Public Health, health facilities under other agencies, health educational institutions, health non-governmental organizations, for instance. But at present, the social context has changed considerably with new mechanisms taking part in health activities (Figure 7.3).



Figure 7.3 Linkages of protection mechanisms in the national health system



- Notes:**
- NESAC = National Economic and Social Advisory Council
 - NESDB = National Economic and Social Development Board
 - NHC = National Health Commission
 - NHSO = National Health Security Office
 - HSRI = Health Systems Research Institute
 - ThaiHealth = Thai Health Promotion Foundation

As shown in the figure, the MoPH is the principal mechanism of the national health system and, as the core agency of the government; it is responsible for the operations of health programmes through its administrative, service delivery and technical agencies located across the country. In all such efforts, other ministries also play a role in health-related activities in various dimensions in a coordinated fashion, including for example the National Economic and Social Development Board, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, and the Ministry of Labour. In addition, there are other independent mechanisms, some under the supervision of the MoPH, some are not, including: the Office of the Thai Health Promotion Foundation (ThaiHealth), responsible for the management of the health promotion fund supporting all sectors in society to widely carry out health promotion activities in all dimensions; the National Health



Security Office (NHSO), responsible for the management of the health security or insurance fund for providing health services to the people; the Social Security Office of the Ministry of Labour, responsible for the management of healthcare funds for workers and their family members; the Health Systems Research Institute (HSRI), responsible for the management of funds for supporting the creation and management of knowledge for health; the Institute of Hospital Quality Improvement and Accreditation (HA), responsible for the promotion and support of health service quality development in hospitals and other kinds of health facilities; and the Office of the National Health Commission, responsible for making recommendations on health policies and strategies to the government and all sectors in society using the participatory approach involving all concerned in the process of policy and strategy formulation process.

Moreover, there are several other mechanisms involved in the movements for health such as the National Economic and Social Advisory Council, health educational institutions and technical agencies, health professionals councils, health NGOs, the mass media, health charity organizations, and health civil society networks, such as the National Health Foundation, the Folk Doctor Foundation (Mor Chao Ban), the Consumer Protection Foundation, health civil society networks working on AIDS, village health volunteers networks, networks for Thai traditional and alternative medicine, and health assembly networks.

Besides, at the local level there are local administrative organizations such as the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, Pattaya City, provincial administration organizations, municipalities, and Tambon (subdistrict) administration organizations, totalling more than 7,000 nationwide in number, each responsible for a wide variety of health activities according to the intent of the 1997 constitution and other relevant laws.

It is obvious that mechanisms involving health are numerous and different in their missions and they are not under the supervision of the MoPH rather they have to work collaboratively in a pluralistic society. However, the MoPH has to play a key role in coordinating the efforts of all agencies to create synergy and move forward the actions of all subsystems towards the achievement of the common goal of health for all. In this connection, the MoPH has to readjust its role as an operator only for essential activities and promote as well as support other organizations and mechanisms to function as operators to the maximum extent possible.

