

Research Project on Financial Incentive for Healthcare Workers at Hospitals Under the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Public Health

Executive Summary

This research project aims at determining actual wages paid to healthcare workers at hospitals under the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Public Health and their employment situation so as to gather basic information for Thailand's health-workforce management and efforts to solve its problems. Under the project, the research was conducted in eight provinces – two provinces from each region – in January 2015. Target group was medical and healthcare workers in professions directly related to medicine and healthcare, who hold a bachelor's degree or higher. Questionnaires were used to gather data on wages actually paid to the target group. Descriptive statistics and analysis were used in analyzing data.

Based on findings, the research can determine the average monthly pay of healthcare workers in each profession. Pay rates within the same professions mostly vary. Factors affecting the monthly pay rate at a statistical significant level are: healthcare workers' age; employment method; profession; specialization; the type of their hospital as categorized by the Regulation on Financial Incentive No. 8; the number of workers in the same field at their hospital; the fact that their hospital is in the three southernmost provinces or otherwise; outpatient-care performance; and Case-Mix Index or CMI (Sum of Adjusted Relative Weight for Inpatients).

Findings show financial incentive varies even though it is based on the same regulation. In some cases, the difference takes place because of staff shortage. But in some other cases, pay rates vary without any clear reason. In addition, findings show the financial incentive of most healthcare workers are not commensurate with their job responsibilities and performance. In the long run, such fact looks set to affect hospital efficiency.

In response to the findings, the Public Health Ministry is recommended to manage financial-incentive budget in the most efficient manner by developing the pay rate that is commensurate with productivity. Pay should increase in line with growing workload. Efforts should be made to reduce pay increment that is based on age. On-top incentives should be improved.

Incentives that are calculated based on work duration should be adjusted to reflect the difficulty of work involved, actual workload increase, and increased work quality. Moreover, the Public Health Ministry should accord importance to non-monetary benefits too.