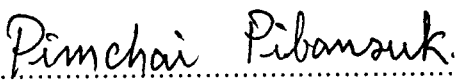THESIS TITLE: A STUDY OF STATUS, PROBLEMS, NEEDS AND OPINIONS OF

PUBLIC HEALTH PERSONNEL IN NAKONRATCHASIMA

PROVINCE ON THE USE OF HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the status, problems, needs and opinions of public health personnel in Nakorn Ratchasima Province on the use of health information technology. The sample consisted of 199 public health personnel from Nakorn Ratchasima Provnicial Public Health Office, Provincial Hospital, District Public Health Offices and District Hospitals. Of these 199 persons, 38 were public health administrators and the other 161 persons were public health staff who were responsible for the organization of health information data. The tool used in the study was a questionnaire, developed by the present researcher himself, about the status, problems, needs and opinions of public health personnel. Analysis of the data collected was done through a SPSS/ PC$^+$ computer program to compute the percentage, arithmethic mean and standard deviation.

The findings:

On the status of the use of health information technology by the administrators, it was found that they had applied health information technology to their areas of administration,

academic and service. They also used health information technology to compare their stated goals, to present their works and to do a follow-up evaluation. There was a use of the LAN and Internet data networks. The public health staff, on the other hand, had used computer technology in the collection and storing of data, the preparation of general documents, the presentation of data, the analysis and processing of data and data communication through a variety of computer programs in accordance with the task, as well as the use of telecommunication technology in data communication.

On the problems concerning the use of health information technology, the administrators encountered the problem of their own incapability of collecting and storing the data systematically. Their staff were incapable of doing the data analysis and processing properly. Regarding the use of computer networks for health information data, it was found that the data often were not up-to-date and or unsuitable for the purpose. The staff, on the other hand, had their problems concerning the use of computer for data communication, data analysis and processing and data presentation. They also encountered the problems of how to use computer programs in connection with a network system and the use of computer programs for statistical analysis. Their other problems included the insurmountable quantity of data, lack of an information center and their problem of not knowing how to operate the computers and how to use computer programs.

On the need for use of health information technology, the administrators wanted to use computer technology to organize database, for data processing and verification of the data before processing. They also wanted their personnel trained in the analysis and processing of data and the organization of database, and the need for a connection with the LAN and Internet data networks. The staff, on the other hand, wanted to develop computer technology, data collection and storing, data analysis and processing, data presentation, preparation of a handbook on how to operate computers and the use of computer programs. They also wanted a connection with both the LAN and Internet data networks.

On the opinions concerning the use of health information of the public health personnel, the administrators opined that information technology had helped develop health information data system, speed up health service and make work performance more efficient. There should be a development in the organization of data system and the enlargement of the personnel's knowledge and attitude. There should also be a connection with the LAN and Internet data networks,

the government support for adequate funding and training. The staff, on the other hand, opined

that there should be an application of computer technology to the analysis and processing of data,

the presentation of data, the collection and storing of data in order to speed up their works and

make their task more efficient. There should be also an enlargement of the personnel's knowledge

and attitude and a connection with the LAN and Internet data networks. The authorities concerned

should lend their support to the training of personnel. They should also make clear the policy and

plans of action to the staff.