SATHAPORN PADGRED : THE REFERRAL SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES ORGANIZATION NAKHONPATHOM PROVINCE : VIEWS OF ADMINISTRATORS AND HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS. THESIS ADVISORS : PIYATHIDA TRIDECH Dr.P.H., ORANUT PACHEUN Dr.P.H., DUSIT SUJIRARAT M.Sc.(Bios)., THAWAN POBLAB M.D. M.P.H 122 P ISBN 974-663-247-7

The referral system of public health facilities in Nakhonpathom remain unsatisfactory. A cross-sectional study was conducted to assess the referral system administration using Koontz's theory and the relationship between variables. The sample consisted of 314 health care providers and administrators. Data collection was done during June-August 1999 by using questionnaires. Data was analysed using Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient, Stepwise multiple regression analysis.

Results of study showed that the majority of the sample were females (64.6%), average age 37.8 years, completed bachelor degrees (52.6%), and average work experience 13.8 years. Most had never been trained regarding the referral system. Most public health organizations lack official vehicles. Health care providers use private vehicles to refer cases. Distances did not exceed 30 kilometers, and travel duration was within half and hour. The administration of the referral system was found to be at a level which called for improvement (69.4%). For planning, the system lacks guidelines for practice, rehearsal and collaboration with the private sector. In addition, many aspects need to be improved; personnel development, welfare, life insurance and regular meetings in order to discuss problem cases. Lack of vehicles for referral cases in government sectors, inadequate ambulance services from private hospitals and lack of proper communication systems were significantly related to the referral system administration (p-value < 0.05). The results of analysis revealed that the 3 significant variables above could explain the variation of the referral system administration at 16.3% Study results suggest that administrators should develop guidelines in practical action and consider the distribution of vehicles to health centers. Collaboration and coordination should also be strengthened together with communication systems.