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ARUNRAT WATTANAPALIN : THE ACCEPTANCE OF PERSONS WITH HIV/AIDS IN THAI FAMILIES : A CASE STUDY IN BANGKOK METROPOLITAN AND SURIN PROVINCES. THESIS ADVISORS : VEENA SIRISOOK, Dr.P.H., SANTHAT SERMSRI, Ph.D., SUPORN KOETSAWANG, F.R.C.O.G. 272 p. ISBN : 974-662-554-3

The policy about treating HIV/AIDS infected persons stresses the importance of home based care. The objectives of this study are to examine the meaning of family acceptance and the family's acceptance to live with an HIV/AIDS infected person. This study also aims to investigate the practices that demonstrate this acceptance in Bangkok and Surin Provinces. The study was designed as a qualitative research. The data was derived from in-depth interviews with 28 families with 35 HIV/AIDS infected members.

Although the Thai families in Bangkok and Surin Provinces have the different structure, race, culture, economic and social status, this study shows that there are no serious significant differences in their understanding of meaning and their practices of living together. The results of this study reveal that the meaning of the acceptance to live with AIDS are : (a) having no feeling of disgusting, (b) knowing the differences between a person with AIDS and the disease called "AIDS", (c) maintaining the role of the infected member in their family and (d) being aware of person's value. For practice, this study shows that there are different degrees of acceptance among the families. Socialization, especially in roles and duties of the family members, may influence family members the reaction of the presence of HIV/AIDS infected persons. Besides these, the concepts of gratitude, loving, family attachment and feeling pity for the HIV/AIDS member, together with the HIV infected person's previous behavior also determine the level of acceptance in Thai families.