

Thesis Title Health Care Ethics in Thai Traditional Medicine:
 A Case Study of Ayurved-Vidyalaya
 (Jivokomarbhacc)
Name Roongnapa Kongthai
Degree Master of Arts (Ethical Studies)
Thesis Supervisory Committee
 Chanutra Ittithumwinit, M.Ed.
 Sumana Tangkanasingh, Docteur en Sociologie
Date of Graduation 12 May B.E.2540 (1997)

ABSTRACT

The purposes of this research were to study the history and ethics of Thai traditional medicine and to explore the service system as well as to examine ethical principles held by Thai traditional healers. The methods used were both documentary and field research. Twelve healers in Bovornived Boranvetchgum in Ayurved-Vidyalaya (Jivokomarbhacc) were observed and interviewed.

The findings from documentary research demonstrate that Thai traditional medicine had a constant role in the local health care system through our history. It was developed into herbal medicine, medicine using supernatural power, medicine using astrology and medicine basing on the theory of the four elements. Knowledge of traditional treatment was passed on within families in the past and at the present time the art of traditional medicine is taught at

traditional medical school. Buddhism has had the preponderant role in Thai traditional medicine up until now.

The findings from the field survey revealed that the Ayurved-Vidyalaya applied some modern medical technology to the Thai traditional system. The ethical principles used by healers are those of the equal treatment for all patients and the investigation to improve knowledge as much as possible. These attitudes are regarded as coming from the Buddhist teaching (Samānattatā and Vimamsā). Deceiving the patients was considered unethical. The ethical problems in the service in Ayurved-vidyalaya are firstly, the conflict between ethics and economics, due to the comparative low fixed fee for health care service which is insufficient for appropriate service in a consuming society. Moreover, some patients do not want to pay the fee. The second ethical problem is the lack of love and respect for the profession which has caused the brain drain problem in the institute because this professional practice cannot bring wealth to the practitioner.