

Thesis Title : The Roles of Wireless Radio Network System
in Supporting Primary Health Care Delivery:
A Case Study of Suphanburi Province.

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Date of Graduation : June 3, 1988

ABSTRACT

The use of Wireless Radio Network System (WRNS) in referral consultations is not very common among the developing countries. Thailand has incorporated this system in the referral services infrastructure, with the aim to decentralise curative services to Tambon level (sub-district) in the direction of making them self reliant within the existing resources. The present study is an attempt to highlight some aspects of WRNS as a support to primary health care management.

The objectives of the study were :

1. To study the functions of WRNS by measurement of referral consultations, referral services and information of referral cases.
2. To assess the attitude of health and medical personnel towards wireless radio network system.
3. To study the availability of drugs in the treatment of consulted cases at peripheral institutions.
4. To compare the usefulness of wireless radio network system through its volume of referral services rendered.
5. To recommend the possibility of replication of wireless radio network system in India with special reference to Rajasthan state.

Six health centres, two from each of the purposively selected zones, based on different distances from provincial head office, were included in the present study and 32 users (health personnel) of the system from health centres and district /provincial hospitals as well as administrative offices were interviewed.

It was revealed that majority of users had positive attitude towards WRNS. They were optimistic in its usefulness and their furtherance of knowledge and skills due to repeated communication with physicians and higher officials. Utilisation of WRNS in distant zone was less than other zones and hence they referred more number of cases. On the other hand the WRNS could save number of patients from referral to higher levels in closer and middle zones.

There is scope for improvement through training of users, 24 hours operation and appraisal of problems and their resolution. It is recommended that feasibility, cost and usefulness should be considered before its replication in Rajasthan state of India and other developing countries.