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M.P.H.M. (PRIMARY HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT)

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LE THANH LIEM: PATIENT'S DELAY IN SEEKING TREATMENT FOR  
PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS, IN LONG AN PROVINCE, VIETNAM. THESIS  
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In recent years there has been the resurgence of TB epidemics in many parts of the world, even in the industrialized nations, but particularly in the South-East Asian Region including in Vietnam where TB has been the major health problem in which delay diagnosis still is a common error. This research aimed to study patient's delay in seeking treatment for TB among adult population in Long An province, Vietnam. The characteristics of socio-demographics, psycho-social factors and source of information were examined and at the same time the independent variables and patient's delay were analysed to determine their association. The sample size in this study was 192 TB patients who were admitted at the TB center from February 1<sup>st</sup> to March 15, 1999. Data was collected through interviewing by using the structured questionnaire and patients' records.

The findings of the study revealed that 69.8% of the respondents delayed in seeking treatment; 50% delayed for 5-8 weeks, 43.3% for 9-24 weeks and 6.7% for more than 24 weeks. The association between patients' delay and marital status were statistically significant with the p-value of 0.04. Sex, income, education, distance, occupation, knowledge, perception and source of information were not significantly associated with the patients' delay in seeking treatment for tuberculosis. Some characteristics of patients who delay in seeking treatment for TB were still the problematic and need to be considered such as wrong perception on etiology and transmission. Especially women and low educated people in particular still kept their traditional perception as the basis of their way of thinking and tried to hide the fact that they had TB.