

Primary health care in the hill tribe villages

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ABSTRACT

An operational research in providing primary health care was undertaken in hill tribe villages in the opium cultivating area of northern Thailand. It was a part of the comprehensive community development programme which aimed at replacing opium poppy cultivation and swidden agriculture with a more acceptable and fruitful way of living. It was also believed to be a mandatory activity in the prevention of opium addiction and the treatment of addicts in these communities where opium was used as a drug for treatment of physical and mental disorders. Population, nutrition, hygiene, sanitation and prevention of diseases were identified as the many aspects of health problem in addition to care of the sick. The primary health care programme needed to be comprehensive and feasible considering the remoteness of the area and the peculiar socio-cultural setting. A curriculum and training method was devised and tested for the training of village health volunteers to enable them to provide comprehensive primary health care.

Key words : Primary health care, Hill tribe, Village health volunteer, Opium cultivating area

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