

The Awareness about the Impact on Public Health Resulting from Thailand Moving Towards ASEAN Community of Fourth to Sixth Year Medical Students in a Hospital in Khon Kaen

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Background and objectives: As ASEAN moves towards a unified community in 2015, awareness of the implications of the mobility of health professionals needs to be raised. This study aims to explore the level of awareness among the 4th- to 6th-year Thai medical students regarding the impact on public health in Thailand as a result of implementation of professional mobility within ASEAN.

Methods: This study was descriptive study, setting in a hospital in Khon Kaen, Thailand. A systematic sampling of 185 from the population included the 4th- through 6th-year medical students in academic year 2013 were used. The study tool was self-administered questionnaire. Descriptive statistics were calculated using SPSS-PC v.17 (i.e., frequency, percentage, median, interquartile range, and the 95% CI).

Results: The response rate was 91.4% (169/185). The

study showed that the median score on the cognitive component of the questionnaire was 5.00 from a total score of 10 (95% CI: 5.00, 5.41). The question answered most correctly was about the implementation timing to the AEC in 2015 (76.3%). The least awareness issue was the fact that Thailand's public health will depend on ASEAN socio-cultural policy (5.4%). The issue of most concern was the wide spread of communicable diseases (80.5%). The issue of the least awareness was the potential lack of specialists (42.0%) if specialists move away from rural to urban.

Conclusion: Medical students had an intermediate level of knowledge about facts relating to the policy and a high level of awareness of the potential health system problems regarding the coming implementation of the ASEAN community.

Keywords: Medical student, Awareness, ASEAN community