

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

#### **Historical background and problem statement**

##### **Historical background**

LAO PDR is a developing country. Health problems of people in developing countries are linked with economic development and crisis. LAO PDR has a continuing policy and strategy for the development of human resources, as mentioned in the VI<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Party, 1997 (Human Resources for Health Department, Ministry of Public Health, LAO PDR, 1997). The Ministry of Public Health has responsibility to attain the goal of human resources development for the purpose of “HEALTH FOR ALL BY THE YEAR 2000.”

The country has a policy to provide the same quality of care to all people. People who can afford payment will be asked to pay, while the government will cover the health expenses of the poor.

Mahosot Hospital is a central hospital built in 1910 with French aid. At that time, Mahosot, called “Big Hospital”, provided 50 beds. “Big Hospital” in the local language can also mean “Central”. Mahosot has served French soldiers who were injured in Indochina during World War II. After World War II, “Big Hospital” was named “Mahosot” which means “Precious Medications”.

In 1990, Mahosot Hospital was expanded to 500 beds with 231 nursing personnel. Nursing personnel accounted for the largest number of employees more than half of the total number. Mahosot divides responsibilities into 3 sections: the administration, the medical profession and the nursing service. Each section is under the deputy director of the hospital.

In 1992, the first meeting for the “Development of Nursing Services in LAO PDR” was held in the College of Health Technology Vientiane, with the support of WHO. Soon after, Mahosot officially established the Nursing Service Department. The Nursing Service Department’s role is to supervise nursing practice and service for patient care.

### **Problem Statement**

Mahosot Hospital and its nursing service are responsible for providing care and rehabilitation with cheerful, wholistic and equal service to the people (VI<sup>th</sup> Congress of LAO Party, 1997. Human Resources for Health Department, Ministry of Public Health LAO PDR, 1997). Therefore, the development of human resources in the health field is one of the main policies and strategies in LAO PDR.

Ideally, nursing care must be carried out in collaboration with medical professionals. But in the real situation, nursing is under supervision of the physician. Nurses are uncertain about the meaning and the role of “Nursing”. Nursing and medicine are inseparable. However, nursing care is primarily provided by auxiliary nurses. This situation may be due to the shortage of registered nurses.

The Nursing Service Department in the hospital is divided into two main parts : the first part is the service for in-patients and out-patients, while the second part is responsible for the patient' s welfare. Head nurses are first line supervisors for nursing staff in their own unit.

From the first survey in 1997 (Appendix A), a questionnaire about demographic characteristics and training background, prepared by the project organizer. was developed and distributed to 50 nursing staff. There were 28 head nurses, 17 junior nurses and 5 nursing administrators. Forty-four questionnaires were returned from 28 head nurses, 11 junior nurses and 5 nursing administrators. The report on the training experience was 67.85 per cent in clinical practice but no one had undergone training in nursing administration.

The second survey was done during April-May 1998 on the topic of nursing service management (Appendix A). The questionnaire emphasized the practice of planning and management activities which were divided into 5 parts; organization, staffing, service for patients, care for environment, and control for quality of service. The reports (Appendix A) show that 83.30 per cent lacked practice in planning, especially staffing. For the development of every institution, "manpower" is the key factor to deal with. Nursing administrators also face this challenging mission to provide a suitable nursing staff to give patient service. Even now, there is no training program for head nurses in human resource planning. Therefore, the training program for head nurses in human resource planning, especially for nursing personnel in Mahosot Hospital, LAO P.D.R. is needed.

The training program for this project consisted of six planning steps : recruitment, selection, promotion, compensation, information system, and benefits. Training nursing personnel involves managing "people". Therefore

it is concerned with Maslow's Hierarchy of Basic Human Needs: physiological needs, safety needs, love needs, self esteem, and self actualization.

### **Objectives of the project**

1. To develop a training program for the head nurses in human resource planning.
2. To implement and evaluate the training program for head nurses in order to gain knowledge about human resource planning.

### **Benefits of the project**

1. Head nurses will have basic knowledge for future learning in order to manage their ward satisfactory, effectively and economically
2. Will have a suitable training program for head nurses using the provincial hospital.
3. Will serve as a model training program for others interested in human resource development.

### **Definition of terms**

**Head Nurse** is the first line manager who supervises nursing staff in each organization. At Mahosot Hospital, LAO P.D.R., the head nurses include 12 registered nurses, 12 auxiliary nurses, and 3 medical-assistants (Appendix C).

**Human Resource Planning.** Human Resources are the nursing personnel working within 11 divisions in Mahosot Hospital who have a variety of specialties such as registered nurses, auxiliary nurses, and medical-assistants. Planning is the method of choosing the best people to organize the training program for head nurses at Mahosot Hospital. These head nurses will be expected to gain knowledge and plan activities for discussion in preparing their nursing personnel for everyday work. However, the plan must be flexible, continuous and used intelligently for effective outcomes.

Planning is the first part of nursing administration to identify the activities which will be used to train head nurses to enable them to gain the necessary knowledge to manage their staff.

**Training Program** is the educational activities for head nurses to gain knowledge and plan activities for discussion in relation to planning for human resource in Mahosot Hospital, LAO P.D.R.