

Chapter 4

Interviews

This chapter is divided into two sections. First, we record the interviews with six selected patients who had visited the Thai Traditional Massage Clinic on more than two occasions. Second, we describe interviews with six staff members providing services in the clinic. The purpose of the interview is to support the results of the quantitative study.

4.1 Interviews with patients

We interviewed six patients who were treated with Thai Traditional Massage in 2003 and 2004 by using an unstructured questionnaire. All patients were interviewed twice. Each interview took at least 30 minutes depending on the completeness of information. The total duration of interviews for the six patients' was seven months. The minimum length of time between first and second interview was 7 days, while the maximum was 30 days. On some occasions a patient's visit to the clinic did not coincide with the researcher schedule.

For practical reasons these patients were not selected at random. The patient who had made 100 visits (Patient C) was deliberately chosen because she was atypical in making so many visits. The next three patients (Patient A, B and D) were selected simply because each of them happened to be present at the Clinic at a time when the interviewer visited the clinic. At this stage all the selected patients were Buddhists, so the remaining two patients were selected because of their Islamic religion.

Table 4.1 shows characteristics of the six patients.

Patient	A	B	C	D	E	F
Visits	52	41	100	33	1	1
Period	Oct 99 – Dec 03	Apr 00 – Nov 03	Sep 02 – July 03	Mar 03 – Dec 03	Jan 04	Oct 04
Sex	female	female	female	female	male	female
Age	80	54	57	75	33	45
Religion	Buddhism	Buddhism	Buddhism	Buddhism	Islam	Islam
Marital status	widowed	married	married	married	married	married
Education	High school	Bachelor degree	College	Primary school	High school	Bachelor degree
Occupation	House wife	Teacher	Teacher	House wife	Employee	Nurse
Card type	Gov. officer	Gov. officer	Gov. officer	Gov. officer	Social insurance	Gov. officer
Income/ month	10,000	20,000	15,000	5,000	4,500	22,300

Table 4.1: Characteristics of six patients interviewed

Most of these selected patients had visited the Thai Traditional Massage Clinic more than 30 times, except for two new patients visiting for the first time in 2004. Most of the selected patients are female, and their ages range from 33 to 80. Most of them are married and finished high level education. Three patients work as government officers, two are housewives and another is an employee.

Patient A

Patient A is an 80-year old widow living in Magrood subdistrict in Khokpho district of Pattani Province. She said that she has been worn out and suffering severe aches and pains for a long time because she is a farmer. In the past she got back pain, leg pain and body pain when she was working hard. She had visited the hospital in Yala city as well as the local hospital in Khokpho to get treatment for her pains, but the treatments did not make her feel any better. The doctor at Yala Hospital, a recent graduate who believed in using drugs as a cure-all, prescribed medicine but it gave her stomach aches

and a nauseous feeling that she believed was due to the poisonous effect of the drug. Then she met a person in her village who gave her a Thai Traditional Massage, for which she paid money. She felt much better after getting this treatment, and she knew that the Khokpho local hospital had a Thai Traditional Medicine Clinic, so she began going to this clinic regularly after that. Thus she chose Thai Traditional Massage only because it made her relax and was so inexpensive. Also she can get reimbursed for the cost. She walks on foot to the Thai Traditional Massage service in the hospital because she lives in front of the hospital and the masseurs and health personnel are polite and friendly.

Patient B

Patient B is a 54-year old married female teacher living in Changhaitok subdistrict in Khokpho district of Pattani Province. She is diabetic and had serious foot pain. She had visited the hospital in Yala city as well as the Khokpho local hospital to get treatment for her diabetes. The doctor prescribed medicine but the treatments did not make her foot pain any better. Then because she had heard about TTM she decided by herself to use Thai Traditional Massage in Kokpho Hospital. After getting this treatment she found that it relieved her foot pain. However the government reimburses her after she pays for the Thai Traditional Massage service. Her house is about 8 kilometres from the TTM Clinic and takes 30 minutes travel time by motor cycle. She visits the clinic to get this treatment once a month on average.

Patient C

Patient C is a married female teacher aged 57, living in Kokpho subdistrict in Kokpho district of Pattani Province. We interviewed her nurse and one of her relatives who are taking care of this patient because she is paralysed. She got seriously injured in June

2002 when a car hit her while she was walking on the footpath in front of her house. Her head hit the footpath and consequently she needed an operation on her brain. After the operation in Yala hospital she remained in a coma and couldn't move her body. She received medicine and physiotherapy treatment by a doctor in Yala hospital and was discharged. But she developed bed sores when she stayed in her home so her family took her to Khokpho Hospital, where she was admitted, and a doctor treated her using a combination of medicine, physiotherapy and Thai Traditional Massage, with the object of getting her circulation system to flow all over her body. She can get reimbursed for the cost. She remains in the hospital and still cannot speak and help herself, but her muscles have not atrophied.

Patient D

Patient D is a 75-year old married woman living in Napradoo subdistrict in Khokpho district of Pattani Province. In the past she worked as a commercial salesperson, travelling everywhere. After suffering chronic knee pain for many years, in desperation she visited both Yala Hospital and Khokpho local hospital for treatment. The doctor prescribed medicine and treatments for two months she didn't feel any better. Then her friend recommended TTM treatment. At first she tried TTM from a local doctor near her village. Now she takes a bus to the Thai Traditional Massage service in Khokpho Hospital. The government reimburses her after she pays for the massage service because her children are government officers. As a result her knee pain has gone away and her experience from the massage treatment is good provided it she gets it regularly. She goes for treatment almost every week.

Patient E

Patient E is a 33-year old married man living in Nakate subdistrict in Khokpho district of Pattani Province. He played football all the time, but developed knee and muscle pains. To relieve these pains he usually got massages from local masseurs in the villages. His parents had taken him to masseurs in his community since he was young, so he got to know and trust these local masseurs, who he believed could help him to alleviate muscular fatigue and pain better than getting massages from hospital clinics, and he felt more comfortable with such people. Also, the massage service in the local community is very accessible and you don't have to wait very long. The price varies from 12 baht to 112 baht depending on the philosophy of the masseur. He tried the TTM service in Khopho Hospital but he still prefers the treatment in his village, because knowledge from a Thai traditional masseur in the community is a national heritage providing ancient wisdom.

Patient F

Patient F is a 45-year old married female nurse living in Khokpho subdistrict in KhokPho district of Pattani Province. After finishing her work for the day, whenever she feels tension or stress or any serious health problem, she gets a massage to relax her muscles and get relief. Her husband works in Phuket and she goes there to see him on weekends. She got a massage for the first time in a shop in Phuket on one of these visits. When she found that Khopho Hospital provided a TTM service she decided to use it, because it is convenient and, being a government officer, she can get reimbursed for the cost. She is also happy to use the TTM services available in shops or from local masseurs in her village because the waiting time is not long and they are easily accessible. When asked why Islamic people tended not to use the TTM service in the

hospital, she said that Islamic people believe local masseuses have more experience and can be trusted better to cure health problems. Another reason is that the TTM Clinics in the hospitals are not advertised effectively in the villages such as hers. But she knew about the hospital TTM Clinic because she works in the hospital.

4.2 Interviews with staff members

We also interviewed six government officers who worked at Thai Traditional Medicine Clinic in Khokho Hospital. For these staff members, we interviewed by using an unstructured questionnaire for approximate 30 minutes for each participant. All six interviews took the week to complete. Because staff members worked every day. Their demographic characteristics are given in Table 4.2.

Most of them are female, their ages range from 26 to 43, and five of them are Buddhists. All of them were married, four had completed diplomas in Thai Traditional Medicine, one had completed a diploma in Applied Thai Traditional Medicine and another had spent 300 hours taking courses for the massage certificate from the Ministry of Public Health. Most of them are government officers. Their monthly incomes ranged from 4,600 to 13,000 baht.

Staff	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Sex	Female	Female	Female	Male	Female	Female
Age	43	37	36	43	26	37
Religion	Buddhism	Buddhism	Buddhism	Buddhism	Islam	Buddhism
Marital status	Married	Married	Married	Married	Married	Married
Education	Diploma in TTM	Diploma in TTM	Diploma in TTM	Diploma in TTM	Diploma in ATTMM	Accounting Diploma
Occupation	Gov. staff	Gov. staff	Gov. staff	Gov. staff	Employee	Employee
Income/ month	8,220	8,020	5,300	13,000	6,420	4,600

Table 4.2: Demographic characteristics of staff members interviewed

Staff member U

U is a 43-year old married woman living in Muang district of Pattani Province. Since graduating from college in 1984 she had worked as a nurse aid in Pattani Hospital. In 1996 she took the Ministry of Public Health examination for employees. The people who pass this examination can take leave to study the Thai Traditional Medicine curriculum at The Institute of the Ministry of Public Health in Bangkok for 2 years. This curriculum includes Thai Traditional Medicine, Thai Traditional Pharmacy and Thai Traditional Massage courses. When she graduated in 1999 she was promoted to become a tenured government officer and moved to Khokpho Hospital, with increased salary and fringe benefits. She transferred to Khokpho Hospital because Pattani Hospital does not have a TTM clinic. She is very happy because she likes her job and the money is good.

Staff V

V is a 37-year old married woman living in Maelan district of Pattani Province. Like U, she was an employee (nurse aids) of Pattani Hospital since 1988, starting her study for the TTM diploma in 1995 and graduating in 1998 and then moving to work as a massage therapist in Khokpho Hospital.

Staff W

W is a 36-year old married woman living in Khokpho district of Pattani Province. Like U and V, she had initially been a nurse aid at Pattani Hospital since 1992, but she left her job because it was too inconvenient to travel to Pattani from her home town. She managed to find another job as a nurse aid in Khokpho Hospital, and while working there she enrolled in the bachelor degree in Management, studying part-time at Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University and graduating in 1997. During this time she

also passed the certificate in Thai Traditional Massage based on 300 hours of massage experience, and took leave to study Thai Traditional Medicine at The Institute of the Ministry of Public Health in Bangkok for 2 years. When she completed all these studies she was appointed as a government officer at Kokpho hospital. Like U she loves her work and is happy with the salary, and an added benefit is that she can give TTM therapy to her sick father.

Staff X

Staff X is a 43-year old married man living in Muang district of Pattani Province. He was employed in the Pattani Public Health Provincial Office (PPHPO) for a long time as a watchman. Then he passed the examination in the TTM curriculum and got leave to study at The Institute of the Ministry of Public Health in Bangkok. After he finished the PPHPO was closed so he moved to Khokpho Hospital and became a government officer with increased salary and benefits. He loves the job because he likes helping people, particularly poor people who he doesn't charge.

Staff Y

Y is a 26-year old married woman living in Muang district of Yala Province. She did her Diploma of Applied Thai Traditional Massage (ATTM) from Ayurveda College, a private college where she studied for three years. This curriculum includes courses in applied Thai Traditional Medicine, Thai Traditional Pharmacy and Thai Traditional Massage, and requires its students to learn to use scientific instruments for various medical procedures. After graduating in 2000 she went to Phuket and got a job working in a hotel as a Complementary and Alternative Medicine therapist, where the money was good and her fluency in English was useful. After her marriage she got a job in Khokpho Hospital in 2002 to join her husband in Yala, but only as an employee,

because current government policy in Thailand does not adequately recognise qualifications from private colleges. Because the knowledge she had gained from her qualifications were not being adequately used or recognised in Khokpho Hospital, and also because her salary as an employee was low, she quit in January 2005, and is now setting up her own business in Yala. She strongly believes that the curriculum in ATTM at Ayurveda College is based on sound science and proven traditional knowledge and is even more relevant than what is taught in the program in Thai Traditional Medicine in the government Ministry of Public Health. She hopes that the government will recognise these qualifications in the future.

Staff Z

Z is a 37 year old married woman living in Khokpho district of Pattani Province. She started in employee (nurse aids) at Khokpho Hospital. She did not get the diploma in Thai Traditional Medicine because she did not take the examination for the Thai Traditional Medicine curriculum. But she got the certificate in Thai Traditional Massage based on the 300 hours of massage experience. She receives a lower salary and less welfare benefit than government officers, but she enjoys her job.