Exploring the Health Care Experiences
of Rural Thai People Living with
Acquired Valvular Heart Disease

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Doctor of Philosophy
in
Nursing
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New Zealand

Supatra Buatee
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ABSTRACT

Valvular heart disease (VHD) is a preventable disease but it is one of the major causes of chronic illness in developing countries. As this disease is curable by surgery, access to appropriate and effective health care is necessary to prevent people from developing this disease and to treat people with VHD. The voices of people living with this condition will provide direction for health professionals in the development of better health care services for those living with VHD. This qualitative narrative study aimed to explore the experiences of individuals living with VHD.

Thirty individuals diagnosed with VHD participated in this study drawn from a population of individuals attending a Thailand provincial hospital. They participated in การสนทนากับผู้ป่วย (open and honest conversation) which was supported by a Thai cultural stance to build the trust necessary for the conversations. Conversations aimed at eliciting information about personal health care experiences were undertaken and lasted from 30 to 90 minutes, all were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim. Multistage narrative analysis methodology was used to identify emerging themes and three major themes emerged: autonomy and life with VHD, the effort of learning for life with VHD, and the maximisation of resources for the management of life with VHD. All of these themes indicated difficulty of access of acceptable and affordable care and difficulty in involvement in health care and illness management. These findings suggest that health care structures, resource distribution and the way professionals interact and communicate are important factors in the health care experiences of individuals living with VHD.

Health care services that are based on the principles of equity and balance of power between institutions and clients may support the development of appropriate health care services for all individuals. Culturally-based narrative research is recommended to increase the possibility of expanding ways of knowing with the inclusion of a range of points of views for understanding health care provision. This knowledge is necessary for the development of client-centred and community-based health care services to improve health care outcomes for the rural population in Thailand.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My first thanks go to my mother, สมานะ ลิ้ว, and my father, ลั่น ลิ้ว, who provide valuable stories which I always use to manage any challenges in positive ways. Also my thanks to my wider family in Thailand and my host family in New Zealand, in particular, Joy and Lou Hill, who helped me complete my thesis with their patience and understanding.

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Thank you to the people diagnosed with valvular heart disease for consenting to take part in this study and providing stories about health care experiences throughout the research process and who also encouraged me to keep going with the demands of PhD study. Thank you to the staff in Mahasarakham Hospital, Faculty of Nursing, Mahasarakham University and Massey University, and my friends for a range of support for completing the research and the study.
# GLOSSARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>A</strong></th>
<th><strong>B</strong></th>
<th><strong>D</strong></th>
<th><strong>H</strong></th>
<th><strong>J</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>อำเภอ -Aa-Nha-Mai</td>
<td>บาท -Baht</td>
<td>ตี๋-Dee-Jai</td>
<td>หัวใจอ่อน-Hua-Jai-Oon</td>
<td>เจ้าหน้าที่-Jao-Nha-Thee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>อำเภอ -Aum-Ma-Bhat</td>
<td>บาทกิริม-Bhab-Krum</td>
<td>ต่าง- Dum-Na</td>
<td>หัวใจหกว่า-Hua-Jai-Rhieu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>พยาบาล-Bha-Ya-Ban</td>
<td></td>
<td>หัวใจหัวใจกว่า-Hua-Jai-Teeb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>เบื้อง-Bhieu</td>
<td></td>
<td>หัวใจกว่า-Hua-Jai-To</td>
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<td></td>
<td>นั่งสีน้ำที่เป็นบวก-Boh-Hed-Num-Pien-Bok</td>
<td></td>
<td>หัวใจกว่า-Hua-Jai-Vay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>บุญกิริยา-Boon-Krum</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**Primary health care units**

**Paralysis**

**Thai currency with the exchange rate (between 2006-2007) as follow:**

- 25 Baht = 1 NZ$
- 30 Baht = 1 AU$
- 35 Baht = 1 US$

**A sin caused by doing bad things**

**Nurse**

**Feeling bored**

**Refusing to comply**

**The good things or bad things which were done in the past life (karma)**

**Feeling cheerful and happy**

**Growing rice in a mud farm**

**A weak heart**

**Valvular regurgitation**

**Valvular stenosis**

**Cardiomegaly**

**Heart failure**

**A pronoun indicating government health**
care worker

Confidence

Have to force one’s self to do something

Echymosis

Staying in the temples and practicing religious rituals

Buddhism philosophy states that knowledge needs to be interpretative rather than recalled and believed without being carefully examined

Time and place

Treating people with respect

Trust that what they say is valid and that they will not be named

Karma

Open and honest conversation

Behaving in the way that as assertive as people who have expertise, privilege, or high status

Not having motivation to do thing

Harvesting rice by hand using a curved knife

Behaving in a way that avoids annoying others

Being thoughtful

Feeling empowered which may be from oneself or others

Vulvular regurgitation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lum-Bak</td>
<td>Hardship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lum-Bak-Jai</td>
<td>Feeling frustrated and stressful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mai-Thum-Tam</td>
<td>Non-compliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mhiey</td>
<td>Weary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mhod-Wang</td>
<td>Hopeless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moh</td>
<td>A pronoun used to describe both Indigenous and professional health care Providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moh-Bheun-Bhan</td>
<td>Indigenous healers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moh-Doo</td>
<td>Fortune teller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moh-Lum-Phee-Pha</td>
<td>Indigenous healer who performs a ritual Dance for spiritual healing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moh-Pra</td>
<td>Monk who acts as indigenous healer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moh-Sen</td>
<td>Indigenous healer who uses massage Techniques as the main form of treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moh-Ya</td>
<td>Indigenous healer who uses herbs as the main form of treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noi-Jai</td>
<td>Feeling unhappy and pettiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngud-Ngid</td>
<td>Feeling irritated and annoyed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nheud</td>
<td>Massage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num-Theum-Pod</td>
<td>Pulmonary edema</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ooa-Jai-Sai</td>
<td>Attentiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oph-Sa-Moon-Phai</td>
<td>Warm steam prepared by boiling herbs and applied to the weak parts to heal them</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
P

The action of blowing the air out from the mouth of indigenous healers to treat a defect

PA-Thong-Ko
Food made from flour and deep fried

Pead-Ok-Keoy-Kun
Prepared to tell all

Pha-Sha-Moh
Medical language

Pha-Sa-Ei-San
Issan language

Phee-Tay-Hong
Spirits of people dying from an unnatural Cause

Phon
To prepare Ya-Phon, a herb is crushed by stone and the resulting powder diluted in water by Moh-Ya

Phong-Choo-Rod
Monosodium glutamate

Pong
Absolutely accepts whatever happens

Phuk-Chee
A vegetable similar to dill

Pien
This is the pronoun that is used for persons of higher status. In this study, the participants used it to refer to both indigenous and professional health care providers, it is a sign of respect

Pra-Thom
Primary schools

R

Rod-Tak-Tak
Modified two wheeled tractors similar to a truck used by the farmer

Rok-Lin-Hua-Jai
Valvular heart disease

S

Sa-Bay-Jai
The state of feeling mellow, cheerful, and comfortable
Sa-Bay-Jai-Kheun: Gain better stage of mind
Sam-Sib-Baht-Rak-Sa-Took-Rok: 30 bahts for all diseases
Sid-Kid-Lang-Kroo: Students threatening the teachers and knowledge
Soa-Sai-Hai-Ka-Kin: Tell a secret to an enemy

Tay-Hong: Dying from an unnatural cause
Thang-Lin-Hua-Jai: Valvular dilatation
Tho-Thae: Feeling unwilling to do things, similar to depression and regression
Tho-Wa: Criticized
Thum-Jai: Trying to have positive thoughts about a negative situation and accepting the effects of that situation that eventually lead to Pong

Tub-To: Enlarged liver

Uod-Ud or Uod-Ud-Jai: Feeling under pressure

Wai-Kroo: Ceremony to mark students’ respect of Teachers

Ya-Kae-Ai: Anti-cough drugs
Ya-Kae-Kai: Anti-pyrogen drugs
Ya-Kae-Uak-Seb: Anti-biotic or anti-inflammatory drugs

Ya-Lha-Lhay-Lhim-Lheud: Anti-clotting drugs
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thai</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>ยานอนหลับ</td>
<td>Anti-insomnia drugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ยาเพิ่ม</td>
<td>Herbs which are crushed and diluted in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ยาทอม</td>
<td>Water and used as drugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ยาวนนาروف</td>
<td>Boiled herbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ยาวานนาروف</td>
<td>Anti-tuberculosis drugs</td>
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