

A charter to achieve health for all

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The Bangkok Charter for Health Promotion in a Globalized World was adopted on 11 August 2005 by the participants of the 6th Global Conference on Health Promotion, co-hosted by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Ministry of Public Health of Thailand.

It identifies major challenges, actions and commitments needed to address the determinants of health in a globalised world by engaging the many actors and stakeholders critical to achieving health for all. The Bangkok Charter provides added value to the health promotion community worldwide.¹

Dr Lee Jong-wook, Director-General of the World Health Organization, said in his opening address to the conference: "The Bangkok Charter for Health Promotion will be the product of many organisations, networks, groups and individuals in many countries. It will urge all stakeholders to work together in a worldwide partnership to fulfill its commitments and carry out its strategies. The action you take in the light of this charter can radically improve the prospects for health in communities and countries around the world."

Also speaking at the opening ceremony of the conference, the Prime Minister of Thailand, H. E. Pol. Lt. Col. Dr Thaksin Shinawatra, noted: "It is clear that good health is a key to progress. In those societies where people are healthy, such communities are sure to progress in many ways. Building health has thus become a priority on national and global agendas."

The full text of the charter can be read in this issue of the *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*. It can also be downloaded from the WHO Health Promotion Unit web site in all six WHO official languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish (<http://www.who.int/healthpromotion/conferences/6gchp/>).

The charter was developed through an open consultation process involving participants from a wide range of groups and organisations around the globe within a period of about 12 months.

The Bangkok Charter Drafting Group was established by the Joint Conference Organizing and Programme Committees (COC/PC) in August 2004. This was followed by numerous meetings and teleconferences among the members of the Drafting Group,² COC/PC members, conference track leaders, and WHO regional offices.³

Comments and input were received from many individuals, institutions and countries through meetings, teleconferences and submissions, including those from non-government

organisations, networks, aid organisations, public health and professional associations, United Nations organisations and business corporations.

Feedback was also received from the consultations held by the Health Development Agency, England, the IUHPE Best Practice Conference in Stockholm and at the inter-country expert meeting at the African Medical Research Foundation in Nairobi. Before presentation to the participants for finalisation at the Bangkok conference, the draft charter was placed on the WHO web site for public comment over a period of three weeks.

At the conference, the draft charter was again revised twice by the Charter Finalization Group,² following feedback from the in-depth discussions during the 29 technical sessions at the conference, and following an extended plenary session before the final version was presented and accepted at the close of the conference.

WHO is committed to the development of a global framework for health promotion strategy for the implementation of the charter, including a set of objectives, timelines and mechanisms to monitor the progress. Colleagues of the health promotion community worldwide are urged to take part in the development and implementation processes.

Notes

1. Tang KC, Beaglehole R, O'Byrne D. Policy and partnership for health promotion (editorials). *Bull World Health Org* 2005;83(12):884.
2. Members of the charter drafting and finalising groups were: Hiram Arroyo, Robert Beaglehole, John Catford, Carissa Etienne, Siripon Kanshana, Moushira Khattab, Ilona Kickbusch, Zanele Mthembu, Alok Mukhopadhyay, Don Nutbeam, Desmond O'Byrne, Bosse Petterson, Blanche Pitt, John Raeburn, Sylvie Stachenko and Tang Kwok-cho.
3. A full list of the members and track leaders is available at the conference web site: <http://www.who.int/healthpromotion/conferences/6gchp/committees/en/index.html>

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