

# HEALTH POLICY, PLANS AND LEGISLATION



Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council,  
Senior General Than Shwe inspecting the  
Pyin Oo Lwin Hospital and giving guidance



Vice Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council,  
Vice Senior General Maung Aye inspecting the  
Department of Medical Research (Upper Myanmar) and providing necessary instructions

## National Health Committee (NHC)

The National Health Committee (NHC) was formed on 28 December 1989 as part of the policy reforms. It is a high level inter-ministerial and policy making body concerning health matters. The National Health Committee takes the leadership role and gives guidance in implementing the health programmes systematically and efficiently. The high level policy making body is instrumental in providing the mechanism for intersectoral collaboration and co-ordination. It also provides guidance and direction for all health activities. Under the guidance of the National Health Committee various health committees had been formed at each administrative level.

For the monitoring and evaluation purpose, National Health Plan Monitoring and Evaluation Committee has been formed at the central level. Built-in monitoring and evaluation process is undertaken at State/Division and Township level on regular basis. Implementation of National Health Plan at various levels is carried out in collaboration and co-operation with health related sectors and NGOs.

### Composition of National Health Committee

1.	Secretary (1), State Peace and Development Council	Chairman
2.	Minister, Ministry of Health	Member
3.	Minister, Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development	Member
4.	Minister, Ministry of Home Affairs	Member
5.	Minister, Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs	Member
6.	Minister, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement	Member
7.	Minister, Ministry of Science and Technology	Member
8.	Minister, Ministry of Education	Member
9.	Minister, Ministry of Sports	Member
10.	Minister, Ministry of Immigration and Population	Member
11.	Mayor, Nay Pyi Taw	Member
12.	Director, Directorate of Medical Services, Ministry of Defence	Member
13.	Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health	Secretary
14.	Director General, Department of Health Planning, Ministry of Health	Joint Secretary

## National Health Policy

The National Health Policy was developed with the initiation and guidance of the National Health Committee in 1993. The National Health Policy has placed the Health For All goal as a prime objective using Primary Health Care approach. The National Health Policy is designated as follows:

1.	To raise the level of health of the country and promote the physical and mental well-being of the people with the objective of achieving "Health for all" goal, using primary health care approach.
2.	To follow the guidelines of the population policy formulated in the country.
3.	To produce sufficient as well as efficient human resources for health locally in the context of broad frame work of long term health development plan.
4.	To strictly abide by the rules and regulations mentioned in the drug laws and by-laws which are promulgated in the country.
5.	To augment the role of co-operative, joint ventures, private sectors and non-governmental organizations in delivering of health care in view of the changing economic system.
6.	To explore and develop alternative health care financing system.
7.	To implement health activities in close collaboration and also in an integrated manner with related ministries.
8.	To promulgate new rules and regulations in accord with the prevailing health and health related conditions as and when necessary.
9.	To intensify and expand environmental health activities including prevention and control of air and water pollution.
10.	To promote national physical fitness through the expansion of sports and physical education activities by encouraging community participation, supporting outstanding athletes and reviving traditional sports.
11.	To encourage conduct of medical research activities not only on prevailing health problems but also giving due attention in conducting health system research.
12.	To expand the health service activities not only to rural but also to border areas so as to meet overall health needs of the country.
13.	To foresee any emerging health problem that poses a threat to the health and well-being of the people of Myanmar, so that preventive and curative measures can be initiated.
14.	To reinforce the services and research activities of indigenous medicine to international level and to involve in community health care activities.
15.	To strengthen collaboration with other countries for national health development.

## Health Development Plans

With the objective of uplifting the health status of the entire nation, the Ministry of Health is systematically developing Health Plans, aiming towards Health for All Goal. From 1978 onwards four yearly People's Health Plans have been drawn up and implemented. Since 1991, short term National Health Plans have been developed and implemented.

### Myanmar Health Vision 2030

Considering the rapid changes in demographic, epidemiological and economic trends both nationally and globally, a long-term (30 years) health development plan has been drawn up to meet any future health challenges. The plan is developed within the broad framework of the national objectives i.e. political, economic and social objectives of the country. This long term visionary plan with its objectives will be a guide on which further short-term national health plans are to be developed.

#### Objectives

- To uplift the Health Status of the people.
- To make communicable diseases no longer public health problems, aiming towards total eradication or elimination and also to reduce the magnitude of other health problems.
- To foresee emerging diseases and potential health problems and make necessary arrangements for the control.
- To ensure universal coverage of health services for the entire nation.
- To train and produce all categories of human resources for health within the country.
- To modernize Myanmar Traditional Medicine and to encourage more extensive utilization.
- To develop Medical Research and Health Research up to the international standard.
- To ensure availability in sufficient quantity of quality essential medicine and traditional medicine within the country.
- To develop a health system in keeping with changing political, economic, social and environmental situation and changing technology.

## Main components of the Plan

- Health Policy and Law
- Health Promotion
- Health Service Provision
- Development of Human Resources for Health
- Promotion of Traditional Medicine
- Development of Health Research
- Role of Co-operative, Joint Ventures, Private Sectors and NGOs
- Partnership for Health System Development
- International Co-operation

## Expected Benefits

Improvement in the following indicators:

Indicator	Existing (2001-2002)	2011	2021	2031
Life expectancy at birth	60 – 64	-	-	75 - 80
Infant Mortality Rate/1000 LB	59.7	40	30	22
Under five Mortality Rate/1000 LB	77.77	52	39	29
Maternal Mortality Ratio/1000 LB	2.55	1.7	1.3	0.9

## National Health Plan (2006-2011)

The National Health Plan forms an integral part of the National Development Plan and is in tandem with the national economic development plan. The plan will ensure effective implementation of the National Health Policy. It covers the second 5 year period of Myanmar Health Vision 2030. Country's health problems were identified and priority diseases and health conditions were identified and ranked while the National Health Plan (2006-2011) was formulated.

### Country's Health Problems

- Need for improvement in rural health care coverage and public health services
- Persistence of disease burden
- Persistence of maternal, infant and child mortality that needs further reduction
- Need of financial mechanism that ensures adequacy, equity and efficiency
- Requirement of systematic plan for human resources for health
- Need for strengthening organization and management of health services
- Under-utilization of health research
- Need of quality data for National Health Information System

### Priority Ranking of Identified Diseases and Health Conditions

Disease/ Health Condition	Rank
Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome	1
Malaria	2
Tuberculosis	3
Diarrhoea/Dysentery	4
Cholera	5
Avian Influenza	6
Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever	7
Vaccine Preventable Diseases	8
Protein Energy Malnutrition	9
Postpartum and Ante-partum Haemorrhage	10
Drug Abuse	11
PET and Hypertensive Disorder Pregnancy	12
Leprosy	13
Sexually Transmitted Infections	14
Disasters	15
Anaemia	16
Other Complications of Pregnancy, Child Birth & Puerperium	17
Cardiovascular Diseases	18
Acute Respiratory Tract Infections	19
Accidents and Injuries	20
Abortion	21

Disease/ Health Condition	Rank
Cancer	22
Viral Hepatitis	23
Diabetes Mellitus	24
Worm Infestations	25
Iodine Deficiency Disorders	26
Beri-beri	27
Snake bites	28
Occupational Diseases	29
Tetanus	30
Mental Illness	31
Eye Diseases	32
Enteric Fever	33
Oral Diseases	34
Handicap	35
Meningitis	36
Plague	37
Filariasis	38
ENT Diseases	39
Poisoning	40
Rabies	41
Leptospirosis	42

In ranking priority diseases in the National Health Plan 1993-1996 three diseases Malaria, Tuberculosis and AIDS topped the priority list in that order. In the current national health plan the same diseases are included again as top three priority diseases in the ranked order of AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis. AIDS is ranked as the first priority disease because of being accorded highest score on the basis of public health importance and political importance imparted to it and also on the consideration of potential socio-economic impact consequent to it. In terms of disease burden it is observed that malaria and tuberculosis gained higher score than AIDS. Over all AIDS is ranked as the first priority disease because of the higher score, it attained on public health, political and socio-economic perspective.

### Objectives of the National Health Plan (2006-2011)

- To facilitate the successful implementation of the social objective, "uplift of health, fitness and educational standards of the entire nation"
- To implement the National Health Policy
- To strive for the development of a health system, that will be in conformity with political, economic and social evolutions in the country as well as global changes
- To enhance the quality of health care and coverage
- To accelerate rural health development activities

## Main Components of the Plan

- Community Health Care
- Disease Control
- Hospital Care
- Environmental Health
- Health System Development
- Human Resources for Health
- Health Research
- Traditional Medicine
- Food and Drug Administration
- Laboratory Service
- Health Promotion
- Health Information System

### Expected Benefits

National Health Plan 2006-2011 have been formulated within the objective frame of the second five year period of Myanmar Health Vision 2030 and as such is a short term plan to accelerate endeavours to realize the vision of raising the health status of the nation. The plan will carry on the tasks in the previous National Health Plan that still need to be completed and will also be implemented setting sights on reaching health related goals in the Millennium Declaration. In this way the plan will give effect to all round development of the country through raising the health status and will also enable the country as member of the global community to fulfill its roles and responsibilities in the international and regional agenda for health development.

## Health Legislation

Legal provision for the interest of health of the people is accomplished through enacting the following health related laws.

<p>1. Public Health Law (1972)</p>	<p>It is concerned with protection of people's health by controlling the quality and cleanliness of food, drugs, environmental sanitation, epidemic diseases and regulation of private clinics.</p>
<p>2. Dental and Oral Medicine Council Law (1989)</p>	<p>Provides basis for licensing and regulation in relation to practices of dental and oral medicine. Describes structure, duties and powers of oral medical council in dealing with regulatory measures.</p>
<p>3. Law relating to the Nurse and Midwife (1990)</p>	<p>Provides basis for registration, licensing and regulation of nursing and midwifery practices and describes organization, duties and powers of the nurse and midwife council.</p>
<p>4. Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association Law (1990)</p>	<p>Describes structure, objectives, membership and formation, duties and powers of Central Council and its Executive Committee.</p>
<p>5. National Drug Law (1992)</p>	<p>Enacted to ensure access by the people safe and efficacious drugs. Describes requirement for licensing in relation to manufacturing, storage, distribution and sale of drugs. It also includes provisions on formation and authorization of Myanmar Food and Drug Board of Authority.</p>
<p>6. Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law (1993)</p>	<p>Related to control of drug abuse and describes measures to be taken against those breaking the law. Enacted to prevent danger of narcotic and psychotropic substances and to implement the provisions of United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.</p> <p>Other objectives are to cooperate with state parties to the United Nations Convention, international and regional organizations in respect to the prevention of the danger of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. According to that law Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control (CCADC), Working Committees, Sectors and Regional Committees were formed to carry out the designated tasks in accordance with provisions of the law. The law also describes procedures relating to registration, medication and deregistration of drug users.</p>

<p><b>7. Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases Law (1995)</b></p>	<p>Describes functions and responsibilities of health personnel and citizens in relation to prevention and control of communicable diseases. It also describes measures to be taken in relation to environmental sanitation, reporting and control of outbreaks of epidemics and penalties for those failing to comply. The law also authorizes the Ministry of Health to issue rules and procedures when necessary with approval of the government.</p>
<p><b>8. Eye Donation Law (1996)</b></p>	<p>Enacted to give extensive treatment to persons suffering from eye diseases who may regain sight by corneal transplantation. Describes establishment of National Eye Bank Committee and its functions and duties, and measures to be taken in the process of donation and transplantation.</p>
<p><b>9. Traditional Drug Law (1996)</b></p>	<p>Concerned with labeling, licensing and advertisement of traditional drugs to promote traditional medicine and drugs. It also aims to enable public to consume genuine quality, safe and efficacious drugs. The law also deals with registration and control of traditional drugs and formation of Board of Authority and its functions.</p>
<p><b>10. National Food Law (1997)</b></p>	<p>Enacted to enable public to consume food of genuine quality, free from danger, to prevent public from consuming food that may cause danger or are injurious to health, to supervise production of controlled food systematically and to control and regulate the production, import, export, storage, distribution and sale of food systematically. The law also describes formation of Board of Authority and its functions and duties.</p>
<p><b>11. Myanmar Medical Council Law (2000)</b></p>	<p>Enacted to enable public to enjoy qualified and effective health care assistance, to maintain and upgrade the qualification and standard of the health care assistance of medical practitioner, to enable studying and learning of the medical science of a high standard abreast of the times, to enable a continuous study of the development of the medical practitioners, to maintain and promote the dignity of the practitioners, to supervise the abiding and observing in conformity with the moral conduct and ethics of the medical practitioners. The law describes the formation, duties and powers of the Myanmar Medical Council and the rights of the members and that of executive committee, registration certificate of medical practitioners, medical practitioner license, duties and rights of registered medical practitioners and the medical practitioner license holders.</p>

<p><b>12. Traditional Medicine Council Law (2000)</b></p>	<p>Enacted to protect public health by applying any type of traditional medicine by the traditional medical practitioners collectively, to supervise traditional medical practitioners for causing abidance by their rules of conduct and discipline, to carry out modernization of traditional medicine in conformity with scientific method, to cooperate with the relevant government departments, organizations and international organization of traditional medicine. The law describes formation, duties and powers of the traditional medical council, registration as the traditional medical practitioners and duties and registration of the traditional medical practitioners.</p>
<p><b>13. Blood and Blood Products Law (2003)</b></p>	<p>Enacted to ensure availability of safe blood and blood products by the public. Describes measures to be taken in the process of collection and administration of blood and blood products and designation and authorization of personnel to oversee and undertake these procedures.</p>
<p><b>14. Body Organ Donation Law (2004)</b></p>	<p>Enacted to enable saving the life of the person who is required to undergo body organ transplant by application of body organ transplant extensively, to cause rehabilitation of disabled persons due to dysfunction of body organ through body organ donors, to enable to carry out research and educational measures relating to body organ transplant and to enable to increase the numbers of body organ donors and to cooperate and obtain assistance from government departments and organizations, international organizations, local and international NGOs and individuals in body organ transplant.</p>
<p><b>15. The Control of Smoking and Consumption of Tobacco Product Law (2006)</b></p>	<p>Enacted to convince the public that smoking and consumption of tobacco product can adversely affect health, to make them refrain from the use, to protect the public by creating tobacco smoke free environment, to make the public, including children and youth, lead a healthy life style by preventing them from smoking and consuming tobacco product, to raise the health status of the people through control of smoking and consumption of tobacco product and to implement measures in conformity with the international convention ratified to control smoking and consumption of tobacco product.</p>

16. The Law Relating to Private Health Care Services (2007)

Enacted to develop private health care services in accordance with the national health policy, to enable private health care services to be carried out systematically as and integrated part in the national health care system, to enable utilizing the resources of private sector in providing health care to the public effectively, to provide choice of health care provider for the public by establishing public health care services and to ensure quality services are provided at fair cost with assurance of responsibility.