

# CDC in THAILAND



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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has worked with Thailand's Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) since 1980, when CDC established the first Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) outside of North America. CDC and MOPH work together to prevent and control HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, influenza, and other infectious diseases; combat emerging infectious diseases through preparedness, surveillance, and control; translate local research into practice; improve the health of mobile populations; reduce the risk of cross-border disease transmission; and share important lessons-learned with other countries. The continued COVID-19 response highlights how this partnership is key to pandemic preparedness and response.



CDC helps strengthen Thailand's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and set up rapid response teams for the COVID-19 response



Since 1980, more than 228 epidemiologists, including 56 trainees from other countries, graduated from the Thai FETP



97% of people with HIV in Thailand achieved undetectable viral loads, meaning they cannot transmit HIV to sexual partners



In 2013, Thailand and CDC conducted the world's first clinical trial that showed that pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) can reduce HIV spread among people who inject drugs



Since 2020, CDC supported 15 training courses for laboratory scientists in Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, and the Philippines, including courses on biosafety, advanced molecular methods, bioinformatics, and laboratory management



Between 2020 and 2023, CDC's laboratory in Thailand performed more than 10,000 COVID-19 diagnostic tests



CDC supports Thailand to sustain sentinel and event-based surveillance to monitor circulating influenza and respiratory pathogens. Due to these efforts, the Thailand National Influenza Center is regarded as a regional leader in surveillance



CDC worked with Thailand's MOPH to deliver emergency supplies of oseltamivir, an influenza antiviral drug, to Laos within 24 hours. These supplies aided the response to a devastating outbreak of seasonal influenza in 2019



CDC provided technical and financial support to the MOPH for their first-ever WHO course on Ship Sanitation Inspection and Issuance of Ship Sanitation Certificates



CDC worked with the MOPH to develop an electronic COVID-19 vaccine registry for international travel. This system produces a COVID-19 vaccine certificate that is accessible via a smartphone application (MorPhrom)



CDC supported the Thai FETP with an evaluation of the cardiovascular surveillance system in Saraburi province



CDC partnered with the Thai National Cancer Institute to include new screening methods for colorectal and cervical cancer in the national cancer screening program

## Global Health Security

CDC supports Thailand to continue strengthening local capabilities to prevent, detect, and respond to infectious disease outbreaks, achieve the goals outlined in the Global Health Security Agenda (GHS), and implement the International Health Regulations. Thailand is a member country of GHS, a permanent member of the GHS Steering Group, and served as the Chair of the GHS Steering Group in 2021. CDC supports Thailand in its role as a co-lead of the National Laboratory Systems and Workforce Development Action Packages and participant in the Antimicrobial Resistance and Biosecurity Action Packages.

Thailand's National Strategic Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (AR) for 2017-2021 aimed to reduce AR-related morbidity by 50%. The CDC office in Thailand provided technical assistance to assess and strengthen the capacity of health facilities in Bangkok to detect and respond to AR, establish and strengthen national and sub-national AR laboratory networks, build capacity to identify novel mechanisms of resistance, and provide specimens to WHO's supported Enhanced Gonorrhea Antimicrobial Surveillance Programme.

## Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP)

Through Thailand's FETPs, CDC helps strengthen workforce abilities to investigate and respond to disease outbreaks. CDC established the FETP in Thailand in 1980 to train the next generation of public health leaders in Thailand and the region. Thailand's FETP participants gain the skills to collect, analyze, and interpret data and contribute to evidence-based decisions during outbreak responses. In 2020, CDC and the Thai FETP established the FETP-Emerging Infectious Diseases (FETP-EID) track, in which residents work alongside CDC staff for 10 months to gain experience in emerging infectious diseases. During their time with CDC, FETP-EID residents receive on-the-job training in laboratory methods, epidemiologic data analysis, and research related to emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases. Thai FETP graduates are integral staff at Thailand's EOC, especially and play a particularly important role since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## HIV

Thailand is on track to control the HIV epidemic by 2025. As of 2022, an estimated 94% of people with HIV know their status, 91% of people diagnosed with HIV are on treatment, and 97% of people with HIV who are on treatment achieved viral load suppression. As a key implementer of the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), CDC focuses on 14 provinces in Thailand with high rates of HIV. CDC helps strengthen disease surveillance systems, laboratory capacity, case-finding strategies, and safe delivery of medicine during the COVID-19 pandemic. CDC also helps implement HIV PrEP, adult HIV care and treatment, programs to reduce stigma and discrimination, and continuous quality improvement along the HIV continuum of care. CDC conducts and supports research on injectable long-acting PrEP and new prevention and treatment strategies like non-daily PrEP and antibiotics for sexually transmitted infections.

## COVID-19

CDC works with partners in Thailand to respond to COVID-19 by integrating COVID-19 surveillance into the influenza sentinel surveillance system and leading contact tracing, mitigation, and control efforts in Bangkok. To monitor disease spread, CDC also supports serosurveillance (testing blood for diseases) among healthcare workers, refugee camps along the Thai-Myanmar border, and the general public. CDC strengthens border health activities by coordinating with neighbor countries, assessing points-of-entry, and sharing information on population movements. CDC also helped develop a national electronic COVID-19 vaccine registry and certificate system that is used to verify vaccination status for international travel.

## Influenza

CDC supports countries to develop effective seasonal influenza vaccination programs with robust regulatory and delivery systems. These efforts increase local, regional, and global pandemic preparedness. CDC provides support and coordination across Thailand, as well as in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Laos, and to the WHO. CDC's primary objectives include:

- Providing epidemiology and laboratory technical support to influenza detection, response, and prevention activities
- Growing the evidence-base to inform policy decisions for prevention and control programs, including influenza vaccination
- Supporting pandemic preparedness and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic response in partner countries

## Immigrant, Refugee, and Migrant Health

CDC's global migration and quarantine experts address public health threats before they cross international borders and prevent the spread of disease among international travelers, immigrants, refugees, and other mobile populations in Southeast Asia. CDC provides technical support to the Thai MOPH and the Lao MOH related to COVID-19 testing and vaccination, disease surveillance, and emergency response and disease prevention at border crossings. CDC supports disease surveillance and outbreak response in refugee camps along the Thai-Myanmar border and ensures that refugees receive vital treatments and vaccinations for healthy resettlement. CDC experts also ensure that health examinations for immigrants and refugees follow CDC standards for detection and prevention of tuberculosis and COVID-19.

## Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs)

CDC recently worked with Thai partners to implement WHO's Global Hearts Initiative, which strives to reduce the impact of high blood pressure and heart disease. CDC helps increase the MOPH's cardiovascular health epidemiology and research capacities. CDC has also supported Thai FETP-NCD residents and staff to conduct a series of situational analyses and research projects focused on cardiovascular health.



### CDC STAFF

16 U.S. Assignees  
141 Locally Employed



### AT A GLANCE

Population: > 66.8 million  
Per capita income: > \$18,530  
Life expectancy: F 81 / M 74 years  
Infant mortality rate: 6/1,000 live births

Source:  
Population Reference Bureau 2022, Thailand



### TOP 10 CAUSES OF DEATH

1. Ischemic heart disease
2. Stroke
3. Lower respiratory infections
4. Chronic kidney disease
5. Liver cancer
6. Tracheal, bronchus, and lung cancer
7. Alzheimer's disease and other dementias
8. Cirrhosis and other chronic liver diseases
9. Diabetes mellitus
10. Road injuries

Source: GBD Compare 2019, Thailand



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CS322044-AZ Publication Date March 2023