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**Plenary Session III**

**Introduction**

**Topic : Universal Health Coverage**

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- Welcome to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Plenary Session which will discuss the Universal Health Coverage in ASEAN Countries.

- Universal Health Coverage is a recent development in some ASEAN countries particularly Thailand, Singapore, and Indonesia. Unlike developed countries in Europe, Universal Health Coverage has existed for many years.

- As the need for Universal Health Coverage has become significant in ASEAN countries, discussion have been organized by government institutions and universities - but it took many years until the government realized that the Universal Health Coverage is a must.
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- However, the main constraint is scarce resources particularly for funding the scheme of the Universal Health Coverage.
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- Perhaps it is true that every government in the world would like to adopt the Universal Health Coverage in order to give the best healthcare for their people.
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- In spite of different models of health policy, each country has a limitation in developing Universal Health Coverage.
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- Not every country can afford it. This lies in economic power of each country. Of course, political matters sometimes can create obstacles. Nevertheless it depends on the willingness of those who are responsible in adopting and approving the Universal Health Coverage.
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- To be appropriate, priority setting must reflect the objective of Universal Health Coverage. In this regard, there are two primary goals. First, is to improve the overall health of the entire population (efficiency objective).
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- Second, is to bring about a more equitable distribution of health care within the population (equity objective). Neither of these objectives has a universal meaning.

- Other subject in the Universal Health Coverage is the reimbursement of pharmaceuticals. This is a unifying challenge for the Universal Health Coverage.

- Despite the objective to improve as much as possible the health of the population and equitable distribution, no health care system can reimburse every pharmaceutical product which is a difficult decision to be made.
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- Thus, to what extent pharmaceutical products can be reimbursed such as class therapeutics?
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- This plenary session will discuss prospects and challenges of the Universal Health in ASEAN countries. In addition, sharing and learning from each other will be of great value for the ASEAN countries.
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- Our speakers from this session are ready to present their knowledge, experience, and opinion regarding the Universal Health Coverage for the ASEAN countries.
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