



**Statement from the
Wat Phra Dhammakaya
Emergency and Volunteer Medical Team
4 March 2017, 9.00 hrs.**

Since the implementation of Article 44, there has been two tragic deaths. The latest comes from the blockades used at the entry and exit points to Wat Phra Dhammakaya, preventing access by the emergency team. The Wat Phra Dhammakaya Emergency and Volunteer Medical Team is deeply saddened, and hope that this does not happen again. We are establishing a new protocol that will protect and care for patients appropriately and to the best of our ability during the given circumstances.

Wat Phra Dhammakaya Emergency and Volunteer Medical Team has tremendous experience in caring for a large number of people. We have an excellent patient transfer system and have always received support and cooperation from the government sector, emergency medical crews, and 1669 emergency response unit. Once Article 44 took effect, however, communication with others on the outside was far less efficient. Therefore, we plead with the Department of Special Investigation (DSI) and the government to have empathy and compassion, and to carry out official duties while being mindful of basic human rights of citizens and patients' rights, by doing the following:

1. Revoke Article 44 and remove blockades to all entrances and exits throughout WPD.
2. Restore internet, cellular signals, and all other forms of communications.
3. Allow emergency staff swift access through checkpoints by possibly creating security clearance badges in order to speed up response time to patients.
4. Please coordinate with a neutral third party organization, such as the Red Cross, to provide medical care to monks, devotees, staff members, and residents living around Wat Phra Dhammakaya who have been affected by this barricade, especially in the Khlong Song, Khlong Sam, and Khlong Si areas.
5. As far as providing medical care to Wat Phra Dhammakaya devotees and monks, the Emergency and Volunteer Medical Team at Wat Phra Dhammakaya are able to and are fully equipped to provide basic medical care. They are licensed and are highly experienced in their respective fields. This can also prevent a third party interference inside the temple (except in the case of an emergency where outside help is needed) as well as help lift the burden off the government.

6. Currently, sufficient numbers of volunteer doctors and nurses as well as emergency first responders are tasked to look after and care for over 10,000 people inside Wat Phra Dhammakaya. However, the prolonged closure of the temple have worn them down. We ask that the people outside the temple be able to rotate with the people inside the temple at least 2 times a week, with 10-15 people per rotation.

7. We ask for a channel of communication to coordinate between Wat Phra Dhammakaya Emergency and Volunteer Medical Team, and the 1669 emergency response unit for patient transfers.

8. In consideration of the large number of devotees at the temple, who for the most part, suffer from minor ailments that can be treated within temple premises. However, the amount of medicine remaining is not enough. Therefore, we ask for your help to facilitate the procurement, transport of the necessary drugs and medical supplies as determined by the emergency and volunteer medical team of Wat Phra Dhammakaya.

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to the government sector, the kind, efficient emergency crews from every sector, and personnel of the 1669 emergency response units who we have worked with, to care for the health of Buddhist monks, novices, and lay devotees within the temple. We also ask DSI and the government to help facilitate our requests, to prevent another tragedy from occurring amongst one of our Thai citizens.

Wat Phra Dhammakaya Emergency and Volunteer Medical Team
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