



THAILAND

BRIDGING THE GAP

Advancing Prostate Cancer Care in Thailand

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Thailand has made notable progress in prostate cancer care, especially in increasing treatment availability in urban centers and integrating cancer services into universal health coverage. However, gaps remain in early detection, equitable access across regions, and integration of advanced diagnostics into routine care. Out-of-pocket costs for certain therapies and uneven infrastructure distribution continue to limit patient outcomes.

With a **Level 2 – Developing** maturity, Thailand has the opportunity to build on its current strengths and transition toward a more coordinated and equitable prostate cancer care system.

INTRODUCTION

Building on Structured Health Coverage to Expand Equity

Prostate cancer ranks among the top cancers in Thai men, with incidence gradually increasing due to population aging and improved detection in urban hospitals. Thailand's universal coverage scheme has helped reduce treatment cost burdens for many patients, yet diagnostic and treatment services remain more accessible in metropolitan areas than in rural provinces.

With strong foundations in health financing and public health infrastructure, Thailand can accelerate its prostate cancer maturity by expanding early detection, upgrading diagnostic capabilities, and ensuring equitable access to advanced therapies.





PROSTATE CANCER IN THAILAND

Current Landscape and Strategic Gaps

Pillar	Current Status	Strength	Policy Action
Early Detection & Diagnosis	No organized national prostate cancer screening program; PSA testing is available mainly in urban tertiary hospitals. Detection is often opportunistic.	Public hospitals in cities offer PSA testing and DRE, with growing awareness among clinicians.	Introduce risk-based screening programs for men aged 50+ (45+ for high-risk groups), integrating PSA testing into existing primary care check-ups.
Biomarker & Molecular Testing	Advanced molecular diagnostics and genomic profiling are available only in select private and research hospitals.	Strong academic institutions and cancer centers in Bangkok and Chiang Mai with testing capability.	Expand public access to biomarker and molecular testing through government subsidy and partnerships with academic labs.
Treatment Access	Surgery, radiotherapy, and chemotherapy are widely available in urban cancer centers; advanced hormonal therapies available but may require co-payments.	Universal health coverage reduces costs for basic treatments.	Increase radiotherapy and surgical capacity in regional hospitals, and subsidize advanced hormonal therapies fully under public insurance.
Clinical Guidelines	National cancer guidelines exist but prostate cancer-specific protocols are not uniformly applied.	Existing national oncology framework to build upon.	Develop and implement standardized national prostate cancer treatment protocols, supported by clinician training and monitoring.
Palliative & Survivorship Care	Palliative services available in major hospitals; limited outreach to rural patients. Survivorship care not systematically integrated.	Palliative care recognized in national policy.	Expand community-based palliative teams, strengthen rural outreach, and integrate survivorship programs into cancer care pathways.

CONCLUSION & Call to Action

Thailand's **Level 2 – Developing** prostate cancer maturity reflects a healthcare system with solid foundations in financing and treatment infrastructure, but with significant gaps in equitable access and early detection. Building on universal health coverage and expanding rural services will be key to improving survival outcomes and quality of life.



KEY POLICY PRIORITIES

- 1 Implement a National Screening Strategy:** Integrate PSA testing into primary care for targeted high-risk groups.
- 2 Improve Diagnostic Equity:** Expand PSA testing, biopsy services, and imaging to provincial hospitals.
- 3 Enhance Access to Advanced Therapies:** Ensure full insurance coverage for newer hormonal agents and targeted treatments.
- 4 Standardize Clinical Practices:** Roll out national prostate cancer protocols and ensure compliance across all regions.
- 5 Strengthen Palliative & Survivorship Care:** Provide rural outreach, integrate psychosocial support, and establish survivorship follow-up systems.

CONCLUSION

Thailand's progress in prostate cancer care demonstrates the benefits of strong public health infrastructure and universal health coverage. Yet, without a national screening program and equitable distribution of diagnostic and treatment services, many men—especially in rural areas—remain at risk of late diagnosis and poor outcomes. Strategic investment in early detection, regional service expansion, and standardized clinical practice can help Thailand transition from **Level 2 – Developing** toward a more advanced, patient-centered prostate cancer care system, ensuring that all Thai men receive timely and effective care regardless of where they live.