

National

FDA chief faces sudden transfer

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The Cabinet meeting Tuesday approved a transfer of Food and Drug Administration (FDA) chief Siriwat Thiptharadol to be an inspector general for Public Health Ministry.

Medical Services Department Director-General Chatree Banchaun would be Siriwat's successor, while Public Health inspector general Rewat Wisarutwet would be the new chief of Medical Services Department, said deputy government spokesman Nattawut Saikua.

Government spokesman Wichianchote Sukchoterat said that Public Health Minister Chaiya Sasomsup did not give reasons for these transfers of public health officials and it was understood as a change among the agency's administrators for appropriateness and to be in line with the ministry's mission. He did not confirm if the transfers had anything to do with the policy on compulsory licensing (CL).

An informed source at the Public Health Ministry said that the transfers were off-season order and that the Siriwat transfer might come from the CL policy because he led the negotiation committee for the drug price. Siriwat also was the only official who worked on the CL policy that were still serving in the ministry after Mongkol Na Songkhla ended his public health minister term, the source said.

This senior official transfer was the second of its kind in the Samak Sundaravej administration.

The first one was the last week transfer order for Department of Special Investigation (DSI) director-general Sunai Manoemaiudom to serve as the acting secretary-general of the newly established Office of Public Sector Anti-Corruption.

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