

TZU CHI NURSING CARE

*With the Compassion of Bodhisattvas,
Where Ever Sufferings Are, We Are.*





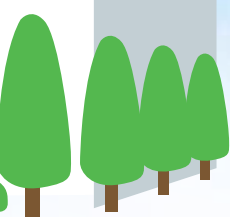
Ministry
of
Health and Welfare

Long-Term Care
Center





10-Year Long-Term Care Plan 2.0 in Tzu Chi Hospitals



The features of the Long-Term Care 2.0 by Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW) are the following: flexibility, expansion, innovation, integration and extension. By stretching forward to cover prevention, and extending backward to include palliative care, which ensures a seamless transition with discharge planning service, the Long-Term Care aims for everyone to live out their lives at the comfort of their home in peace.



**By Chiang Hsin-Hung, Supervisor, Department of Nursing, Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital
Liao Hui-Yen, Vice Director, Department of Nursing, Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital**

Mr. Tsai, almost 70 years of age, had been bedridden for years. The most frequent travel for him in the past few years was between his home and the hospital. Whether it is nasogastric tube slippage, ureteral obstruction, or asthma, he was involuntarily a regular at emergency room. The way he looks at his wife was always filled with helplessness and guilt. Although his wife, Mrs. Tsai, was committed to his daily needs, she was exhausted. Their son must work for money to lessen the family's financial burden, and rarely share the burden of care. Several times he mentioned the thought of sending Mr. Tsai to care center, but Mrs. Tsai could not bear the thought and continued to care for her husband, not wanting to think about how long she can sustain this way of life.

This story is only one of the many, and helping these families is precisely the reason why Long-Term Care 2.0 is planned and implemented.

According to the census of MOHW, from 2014 to 2016 about 30% of the senior inpatients need long-term care. Within the 17 expanded services in the current Long-Term Care 2.0 is a "Connected Discharge Planning Service", yet from its implementation to this day the percentage of patients utilized this service and were connected from discharge to local health offices was a meager 2.5%; furthermore a survey of inpatients indicated a 60% for the general public did not have, or have only incomplete,

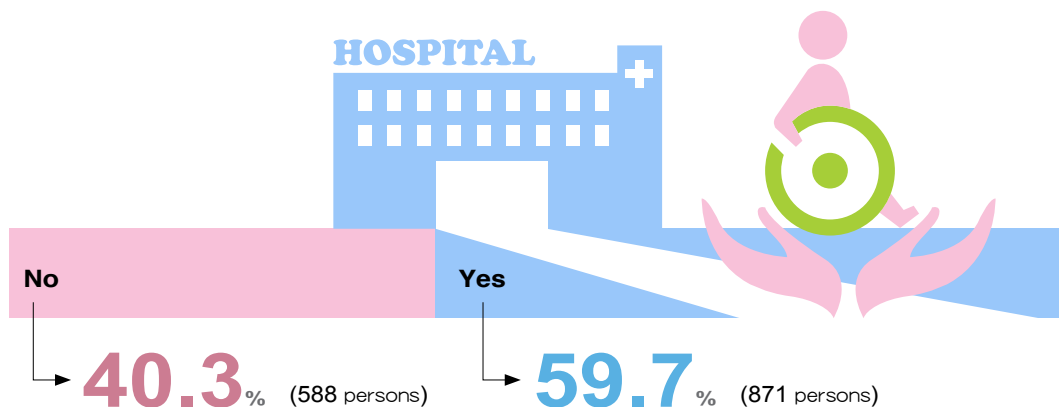
Basic Statistics

Gender	Number of People	%
Female	1,394	95.5
Male	65	4.5
Total	1,459	100.0
Age	Number of People	%
under 20	20	1.4
21~25	516	35.4
26~30	247	16.9
31~35	222	15.2
36~40	231	15.8
above 40	223	15.3
Total	1,459	100.0

Nursing Level	Number of People	%
N	471	32.3
N1	249	17.0
N2	550	37.7
N3	121	8.3
N4	68	4.7
Total	1,459	100.0
Job Title	Number of People	%
Registered nurse	1,155	79.2
Deputy head nurse	62	4.1
Head nurse	68	4.7
Supervisor	23	1.6
Functional unit/Case manager	55	3.8
Nurse practitioner/Senior RN	96	6.6
Total	1,459	100.0
Department	Number of People	%
Internal Medicine	311	21.3
Surgery	214	14.7
Pediatrics	60	4.1
Obstetrics & Gynecology	62	4.2
Intensive Care & ER	286	19.6
Functional Unit	14	1.0
Kidney Dialysis	48	3.3
Operating Room	96	6.6
Outpatient Clinic	190	13.0
Palliative Care	26	1.8
Administration	37	2.5
Others	115	7.9
Total	1,459	100.0
Hospital Working Experience	Number of People	%
Within one year	263	18.0
1~2 years	224	15.4
2~3 years	160	11.0
3~5 years	222	15.2
5 years and above	590	40.4
Total	1,459	100.0

Q1

Have you provided clinical service resources on discharge planning for patients? (N = 1,459)



information on discharge planning. If the frontline nurses can provide patients and families information on the seamless transition from acute medical care to long-term care when they are hospitalized or are about to be discharged, the window period between discharge and care should be significantly shortened, and the continuity from discharge to home care would reduce the disturbance and stress of primary caregivers (Published in: Healthcare on Apr 24, 2017).

Discharge Planning, Placement, and Resource Referral

The editorial team designed a questionnaire to understand the experience of nursing staff on discharge planning and their expectation for Long-Term Care 2.0, in preparation of an aging-society. The electronic questionnaire was sent to nurses in all 6 Tzu Chi hospitals and a total of 1,459 were collected.

The first question tries to understand the ratio of nurses who had provided patients with relevant resources on discharge planning, which the result indicated a whopping 59.7%; on the other hand, about 40% of the nurses claimed that the responsibility of discharge planning fall on acute care nurses, not them.

Why according to the census of MOHW majority of the inpatients did not have information on discharge planning? After face-to-face interviews with several inpatients and their families, it became apparent that they did receive health education from nutritionists, social workers, or pharmacists, but had no idea that they were part of the discharge planning team.

Nurses with discharge planning experience were asked what they have referred. The top three answers were discharge placement (60.7%), social welfare resources (58.6%), long-term care and other medical equipments (57.5%), arrange home care service (44.3%), and continuous and comprehensive consultation (43.6%). The content of the referrals was focused primarily on long-term care rather than short-term.

The innovative model of connecting discharge planning and long-term care of Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital aspire to complete the following: a complete assessment should be done 3 days before discharge, receive service within 1 week after; the content of service include home service, home care, home rehabilitation, caregiver respite, and simple living aids, in which 3 of the services must be provided. It is apparent that this innovative model is meeting the needs of the current situation.

Q2 | What services have you referred for patients during discharge planning? (Multiple choices, N = 871)

Preparation of medical equipments for Long-Term Care



Information on discharge placement



Social welfare resources referral



Continuous and comprehensive consultation



Reduce rate of readmission or outpatient visit



Arrange home care service



Arrange home hospice-shared care



Others



Q3

When reviewing your discharge planning services, what are the priorities of the patients and families you encountered? (Multiple choices, N = 871)

Connecting discharge medical follow-up care



Dementia care service



Establish community-based integrated service system



Connect home palliative care for terminal patients



Home care skills



Others



Enhance Discharge referral to Care Service Center

The census of MOHW showed that counties with the highest percentage of aged population in Taiwan are Chiayi (17.28%) and Yunlin (16.47%). Out of all the patients visiting Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital, which is located in Chiayi County, 72% are from Chiayi and Yunlin. To take care of the local seniors, Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital actively strived to become an A-level community-based integrated service center, where members of the medical teams would proactively investigate patients' needs for long-term care as soon as they are hospitalized, and refer them to the corresponding long-term care management centers of local health offices, supporting patients and their families with backups of long-term care in a timely manner.

When reviewing their discharge planning services, the nurses identified the priorities of the patients and families they have handled in the past to be connecting medical follow-up care after discharge (47.8%), home care skills (45.3%), establishing

community-based integrated service system (25.1%), connecting home palliative care for terminal patients (10.1%), and dementia care service (9.3%). In the open suggestions there were mentions of information of living aids, caregiver support groups, respites, and economic supports.

With the long-term care management center of Chiayi County Health Office as an example, the center provides services like care service, elderly nutrition, home care, home rehabilitation, respite service, transportation, aid purchase and rental, home accessibility improvement services, and long-term institutional services, which are consistent with the experience of the nurses in Tzu Chi hospitals. If inpatients can be referred to the long-term care management centers of corresponding local health offices, almost all of their families' worries can be resolved.

What closely links with the health office long-term care management centers are the long-term care service units, responsible for contents relating to long-term care, set up in each hospital. Take Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital for example. The long-term care management center of Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital (hereinafter referred to as the Care Center) was established in the hospital in 2016. The total number of inpatients receiving discharge planning that year was 1,316, while the number of inpatients referred to the long-term care management center of Chiayi County Health Office, and handed them over to the Care Center for follow-up service after discharge was 8. The referral rate was a stunning 0.6%, much lower than the MOHW average 2.5%. The reasons are presumed to be the lack of promotion of the referral by medical staff across all levels, coupled with the poor understanding of Long-Term Care 2.0 by patients, families, and nurses, resulting in the low rate of referral immediately after discharge.

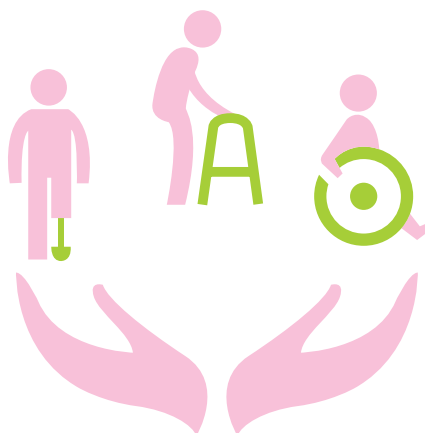
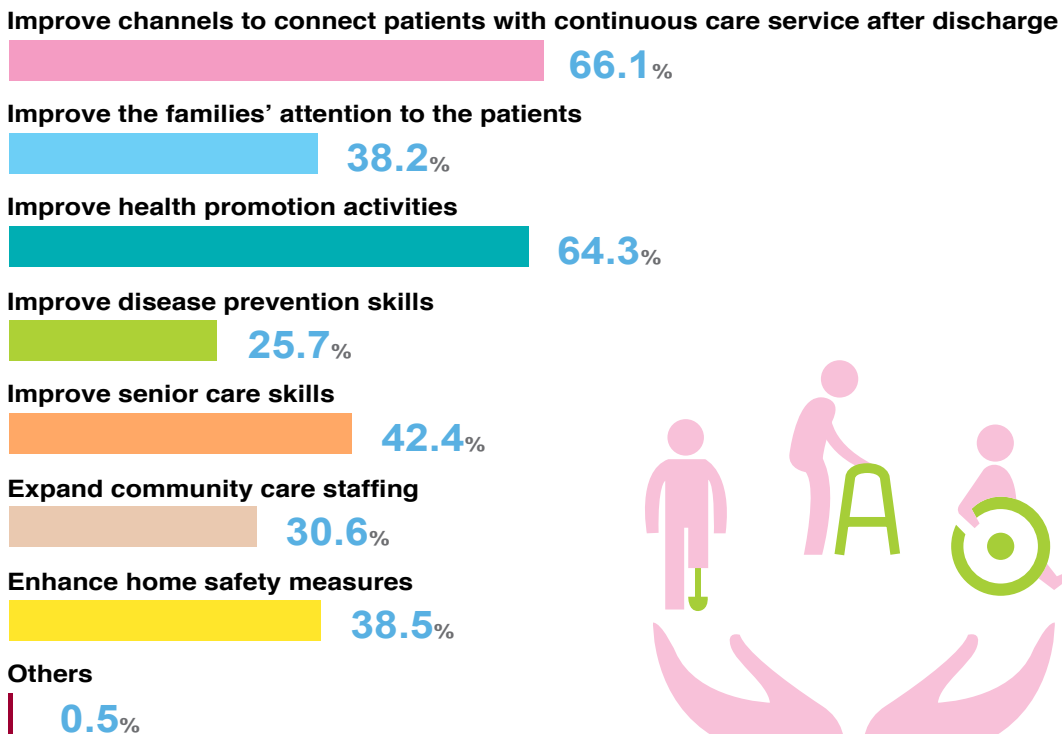
Expand Long-Term Care Coverage to Ease Family Burden

The features of the Long-Term Care 2.0 by Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW) are the following: flexibility, expansion, innovation, integration and extension; the 8 new major categories "flexibility and expansion"; promote and implement trial plans: provide dementia care service, aboriginal community-based integrated services and small-scale and multifunctional service; innovative service: set up community-based integrated service centers, combined service centers, and long-term care station in alleys and lanes; stretching the coverage of service forward and backward to include the prevention and delay of disability, and the discharge planning service and in-home medical care.

Head Nurse Liu Ying-Mei, the adjunct supervisor of the Care Center Home Service of Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital, said that the number of patients referred to the Care Center

Q4

I believe that in today's aging society the current Long-Term Care 2.0 proposed by MOHW should in terms of clinical nursing emphasize on? (Multiple choices, N = 1,459)



are few, mostly referred from nearby health offices. The farthest patient lives in Budai Township along the coast. The care recipients of the Care Center are mostly patients 65 years of age and above, with disabilities, who require home care and senior nutritional food service.

Head Nurse Liu said that, when interacting with the Care Center patients and their families, she can't help but to feel that "we came too late! They need a lot more help! How can we reduce their burden?"

Clinical nurses, when attending to their patients in the wards, handle mostly acute care, and when patients are discharged, their job becomes general health education. In comparison, the home care under the Long-Term Care allocate more time to a single

patient, which makes individualized care possible. The home care includes visitation 5 times a week, including meal delivery, bathing, rehabilitation, and other services to cope with the patients' individual needs. When providing care on daily basis, after a while it becomes more like friends or family, Head Nurse Liu said. She mentioned a message that was delivered to one of the staff at the Care Center, "my father passed away peacefully this morning. I would like to thank Tzu Chi for your company. It was because of you he was able to leave so peacefully. Thank you." The message is filled with trust from the family that inspire us in the Care Center to continue our mission, to think and do more for even more patients.

Connecting Long-Term Care of Government and Civil Sector

As to what nurses believe that the current Long-Term Care 2.0 proposed by MOHW should emphasize on more in terms of clinical nursing, the choices were increasing the channels to which can connect with continuous care after discharge (66.1%), increase health promotion activities (64.3%), and improve senior care skills (42.4%). In open suggestions, there were mentions of requests for more available channels to assist the general public to know, to understand, and to use Long-Term Care 2.0, and for better communication to allow seniors to return to their communities while having quality self-care.

It is apparent the need of clinical nurses on clinical services under the Long-Term Care 2.0 is to hope for a better and effective channel to connect patients with continuous care service after discharge. It echoed with the fact that the nurses did not know how to connect with the care management service centers of the health offices. The survey's response also recommended that long-term care should focus on preventive health care, which echoed with the integration and extension of the Long-Term Care 2.0, providing activities and events on health promotion.

In the case of Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital, in outpatient clinics or in general wards, there are many senior patients with several chronic diseases. Even for nurses who handle acute illnesses on daily basis can perceive the increasing demands of the entire society for long-term care. It is hoped that the promotion of the Long-Term Care 2.0 can grant more seniors with disabilities the opportunity to age gracefully at home, with the assistance and care from professional caregivers that would put their families at ease; and that the Long-Term Care 2.0 can be fully implemented in the future, so that when we are old, we can rely on professionals for health management, and age happily and gracefully in our own homes, without becoming someone else's burden.

Create Elder Friendly Environment both in Hospital and Communities

When I first heard about our hospital agreed to be a testing ground for the Long-Term Care 2.0 by MOHW, the first thought that came to mind was: “this is a huge project, can we refuse it?” Of course, the thought was gone in an instant. What followed was that my team and I plunged into the preparation and planning for the Long-term Care intervention.

From Nothing to Stabilizing

From establishing a long-term care center, joining seminars, and assisting in the tendering of home care of Chiayi County, to the lack of home caregivers, starting recruitment, streamlining operating processes, and seamless transitions... relentless challenges came our way one after another.

Like Master Cheng Yen once said, “vows beget strength.” In the wake of emerging obstacles, coupled with miscommunications among team members, in sweat and tears we refined our teamwork, build our hospital’s long-term care program from ground up, successfully recruited home caregivers, and cases started to pour in to the point where it is growing at a steady rate. All these achievements came from the accumulation of hard work from the team.

I remember when the long-term care center of Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital started taking cases, I went with our home care supervisors and caregivers to visit the patients. Since all of our

Liao Hui-Yen,
Deputy Director,
Department of Nursing,
Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital

early cases are patients with complex issues, I thought I should be there so that our home caregivers would not have to face them alone. I remember it was an elderly woman paralyzed due to an automobile accident. Her family wanted the home caregiver to assist the woman with her bath daily, carry her into the bathroom alone, and to clean the house as well. After assessing the environment, we concluded that the house was too small to carry paralyzed patient on frequent basis, and that our responsibility was to the patient, cleaning the entire living space was simply unreasonable. When taking a case such as this, effective communication and coordination are vital to simultaneously provide appropriate care to our home patient and protect our home caregivers. Home care is, evidently, a task that is excruciatingly demanding. To reach a win-win situation all the time is something that we must continue striving towards.

Integrated Dementia Care Center

Another long-term care service is day care center. We started our planning on community-based dementia prevention, and we were able to find a suitable location in



In early August 2017, Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital agreed to undertake the integrated dementia care center of Chiayi County.

the neighborhood. As the facility gradually approaches completion, intensive planning took place to set up the internal structure. We hope eventually we can achieve our intended goal of promoting health among community elders through the service we provide at the day care center.

The Health Promotion Administration has been promoting senior friendly certification for 6 years. It was estimated that by the end of 2017 the number of certified institutions (hospitals, health clinics, and senior centers) should reach 300. Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital was honored to receive the senior friendly excellence award for 5 consecutive years, and is still striving towards the original goal of providing senior care for community elders. From internal to external structure, from the hospital to the communities, Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital has implemented a series of continuous care programs.

Long-term care policy started with elders with disabilities, and has now progressed to the promotion of health among seniors. It is evident that the long-term care recipients are no longer limited to citizens who are ill and are in need of care, but to cover the entire senior population.



The Health Promotion Administration has been promoting senior friendly certification for 6 years, and Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital was honored to receive the senior friendly excellence award for 5 consecutive years. From left: Deputy director Liao Hui-Yen, Vice Supt. Chien Jui-Teng.

For example, to accommodate the demands of dementia prevention and care, the MOHW coordinated and integrated local governments, long-term care centers, hospitals, and social welfare institutions to establish 20 integrated dementia care centers around Taiwan. Dalin Tzu Cho Hospital Dementia Center, inaugurated in August, undertook the task of dementia care in Chiayi County. Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital began dementia care in as early as 2012, set up 14 dementia care locations from Changhua to Kaohsiung. The primary purpose of the integrated dementia care centers set up under the “Community Service Locations” in Long-Term Care 2.0 is the assistance of diagnosis and case management of suspected dementia cases, accompany caregivers with proper care and medical consultations, services, coordinations, referrals, and follow-ups at various stages of dementia, as well as assisting caregivers with the consultation and referral when dementia patients are acutely symptomatic.

The members of Chiayi County Integrated Dementia Care Center consisted of neurologist, family physician, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, clinical psychologist, dietitian, speech therapist, social worker, and Tzu Chi volunteers, fully capable of providing comprehensive service.

Healthy and Worry-Free Aging

Geriatrics is one of the specialties of Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital. Since the average age of most patients is 65, and the ratio of patients older than 80 or 90 is high, the department of nursing began implementing “aging simulation” program, hoping that young nursing staff can experience and empathize what aging feels like, including impaired mobility, blurry eyesight, struggling going up or down the stairs, via this program. Although the participants laughed at each other in class, the point had been put across. With a firsthand experience of aging, the nurses can be more empathetic towards their care recipients in their times of needs.

The hospital also launched community health centers in 2005, and also help other communities to start their own community health groups for seniors. There are current 7 locations. Aside from health education, the centers also offer recycling and handicrafts, which builds towards the physiological and psychological health of the community members. Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital has successfully taken senior friendly environment up a notch: not only should the hospital be senior friendly, the neighboring communities should be too.

There is a line imprinted into my mind—all of us age. I know what I do for elders now is in fact paving way for my own future, so I must be as thorough as I can in every regards. I hope to optimize my nursing capabilities to assist elders in needs to live a worry-free life.



Give More Praise to Clinical Nurses

By Tseng Kuo-Chih, Director of Department of Internal Medicine and Director of Gastroenterology Department, Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital



I recall a time when a nursing colleague came to thank me during her departure from the hospital. At the time, I didn't understand why a person would thank me on the eve of departure, "What would she thank me for?" But then, I sat down and listened to her...

Provide Incomers a Bit More Encouragement to Create Team Harmony

It turned out that she first joined the hospital two or three years ago as a new grad. She was often frustrated when caring for her patients. Fortunately, colleagues, nursing supervisors, and enthusiastic doctors shared with her their working experiences. She said that I was that doctor. "Had you not given me the encouragement, I might have left already."

Therefore, I believe that nursing colleagues

must be motivated, especially those who have just graduated from college. We should listen to their voices to create a harmonious and caring environment, and a good working atmosphere.

For example, there has to be mutual understanding and collaboration among the eight major cancers medical teams. For a doctor, the most critical and close cooperation is with the nursing colleagues. I remember when I was a resident doctor, I often took the initiative to help nurses. In addition to helping them grow, colleagues can learn from each other and foster building consensus. Treasuring the working relationship of nursing colleagues is one of the most important concepts in my medical career.

Nursing Colleagues Feedback in Time, Resulting in Quality Care

We hope that patients will receive the best care, which cannot be achieved by doctors alone. This includes resident physicians, nurse practitioners, nursing staffs,



Dr. Tseng Kuo-Chih of the Department of Internal Medicine of Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital (second from the right in the back row) mentioned that one of the most important concepts of medical treatment is to treasure nursing colleagues. The picture shows Dr. Tseng with the ward nurses and residents.



and other functional teams. With the strength of a team, the quality of care will then be elevated. I often say to the young doctors, residents, or medical students that nursing professionals often help to develop physicians' professional growth. In particular, the nursing staff is critical because they are the first line of defense for patients' care, also providing doctors the best communication.

The nursing staff provides me the truth in all realistic situations and reminds me my negligence. For example, if a patient or family member complains, I can deal with it head-on and respond appropriately. Nursing staff provides patients their first line of defense; in fact, this reduces error rates. With a two-way communication among the practitioners, doctors receive timely feedback and patients the quality care.

The Natural Instinct to Help - a Demonstrated Strength

One night during a typhoon two years ago, a mother and a son came to the clinic. Mom is seventy or eighty year-old and her middle-aged son is slightly cognitively handicapped. They arrived early by bus and waited quietly in the lobby. It was busy. By the time I attended to them, there were only a few patients left. As the storm approached that night, the hospital halted the shuttle service. The couple lives quite far away and the mom's anxiety increased. We learned that they are low-income family and must be worrying the cost of a taxi ride home. While I was pondering, I overheard a nurse said, "Auntie, please wait a moment. There are still one or two patients left. I can take your home afterward."

This incident highlighted the significance that interaction between people can be pure and natural; it is human nature to simply help each other. This kind of simplistic natural instinct exists among attending physicians, residents, and medical personnel. It is just that we are often hiding behind it for many reasons.

In that particular moment, I was touched. The nurse intuitively took the initiative to do such a thing. I benefited a lot from such a good experience. It was during the moment of medical treatment that we can set aside personal bias, profession and wealth. I saw the most intimate and sincere human nature to help other people.

If we can spare a few words, or an encouragement with a pat on the shoulder, such action can change a person's perspective. Whether it's my words of encouragement to a new nurse, or the nurse giving the mother and son couple a ride home, and encouragement to patients or family members, that perhaps at that moment, you've given the person the power to go forward.

As a Practitioner, Treat Nurses as Good Instructors

**By Tsai Sheng-Tzung, Attending Physician, Neurosurgery Department,
Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital**



When I was an intern, senior physicians often advised me to learn from nurses. They said that nurses are the front line health care professionals, and the first ones to interact with patients; they know first-hand medical needs of the patients, Furthermore, nurses are the first ones to contact patients' family members. These and many more clinical experiences could not be found in textbooks or the internet. Therefore, if young physicians could get along well with the experienced nurses, they could handle patients and their families much easier.

Learned from the lessons of the seniors, I devoted more time interacting with nurses as a resident doctor. During that period of time, I met a girl specialized in neurosurgery nursing. We were happily married later. In our family,



she always makes better decisions in dealing with children and many household chores. She is the ‘Teacher’ of the family. Even until now, we often discuss patient care and exchange lessons learned in our jobs. These kinds of exchanges not only give me the appreciation towards the nursing profession, it also reminds me to support, encourage and praise our nurses. In many occasions, the nurses even surprised me with their innovative thinking.

As I moved up to become an attending physician, I established a habit of consulting my nursing staff before I step into the hospital ward. I would discuss the condition of my patient with the nurses and listen to their opinions and ask for their plan and suggestions. Also, I would chat with the family members of the patients, telling them to relax.

Couple years ago, I was in Boston (USA) for advanced study of neurosurgery for two years. One day, in the middle of the night, I experienced acute abdominal pain. The emergency room doctor diagnosed my condition as acute appendicitis that requires immediate surgery.

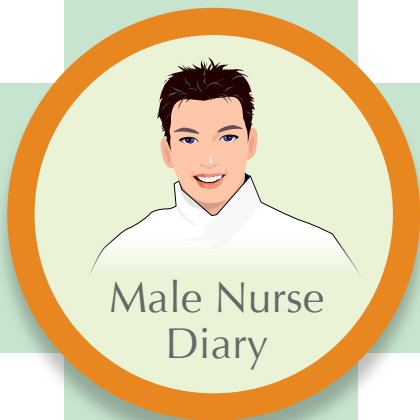
When I returned to the hospital room after the surgery, my wife kept telling me that she was so nervous while waiting, in the middle of the night, to hear the result of my operation. She was helplessly enduring every long passing minute. When the surgeon, accompanied by a nurse, finally appeared and informed her that the operation was successful and everything was fine. She suddenly realized how important it is for the physician and nurse to directly communicate with the patient’s family.

The next morning, a nurse came to ask me about my medical history. Suddenly, she changed the subject and asked me if this was the first time I stayed in a foreign land. She asked me if I was under a lot of pressure this first two months in Boston. I was surprised that she was so concerned about my mental condition. As a medical doctor, I have never realized that pressure and stress are closely related to a patient’s physical condition. To be honest, that was the first time staying in a foreign country. In addition, self-expectation of my advanced study was very high. Therefore, I was under tremendous pressure during the first two months in Boston. I was so relaxed for the way this nurse chatted with me, I felt like she is a Bodhisattva, or an angel. This experience reinforced my thinking that nurses are not only teachers of medical education but also teachers of mental health education. Like a miracle, since that talk with the nurse, I started to adopt the local life style.

The senior physicians in the hospital always remind the young doctors to learn from their patients. This is because the patients provide their pain and sufferings to the doctors to gain experience. Nursing, of course, is an important link in the medical profession. From my own experience in my education and my daily lives, I found that if we can “treat nurses as good instructors”, listen to their opinions, and accept their suggestions then we can build a perfect medical team to serve our patients and their families. I think this attitude is the key to internationalize the Tzu Chi Medical Mission to serve more patients.

Dr. Tsai Sheng-Tzung shares his personal experience – nurses are teachers of medical practitioners, are important link of medical profession. Photo shows senior nurses of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital demonstrate their clinical skill to the intern physicians.





Male Nurse Diary

**Chen Guan-Lin,
Registered Nurse,
MICU,
Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital**

Getting Professional with Human Touch

After graduation from junior high school, I took the advice of my class counselor and entered the 5-year nursing school in Tzu Chi University of Science & Technology, and then 2-year junior college. It took me seven years of preparation, followed by a one year military service in Taiwan to become a clinical nurse. Since I am a Tzu Chi financed student, my career started with an assignment as a nurse in the Medical ICU at the Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital. Before I started my first job, I was a little scared and asked myself, "Why am I so unlucky to be assigned to such a department?" Then, I said to myself, "This is such a strange land for me. The patients there are all critically ill. I have not been prepared to serve them, not when I was in school, not when I was in the military. My year in the military was basically in the kitchen - cooking. This first real job would be very miserable..."

As expected, in the first three months of the probationary period I was in deep trouble. Adjusting to the work environment, rules and regulations, confronting with the critical conditions of the



patients and the side effects of the medicines, handling of the equipment, etc., all pushed me to the verge of a break down. Fortunately, a very kind and patient mentor was assigned to help me. Under her supervision, she would urge me to speed-up, but not to violate the principle to do things right and safe.

I remember that there was a time because of some problem during a shift change and the filthy condition of the patient, my mentor took all the blames on me. I overheard a senior nurse yelling at her by saying, “Can’t do this, can’t do that, can’t even smoothly switch shift.” Ever since that episode, I constantly remind myself to be a responsible professional, never again let others assign the blame after a mistake.

During my off-hours, I routinely discuss clinical problems and record keeping details with my mentor. She would enthusiastically offer her encouragement whenever I make some small progress. Under her direction, I finally finish my one year internship. During that time, I mastered most of the general rules working in MICU. However, I still need to enrich my ability to face the unpredictable situations in the unit. Quite often, senior nurses would notice my negligence during the shift change. I appreciated their advice,





however, occasionally that made my heartbeats faster and my breathing shorter. I tried very hard to absorb the experience from the senior staff. My philosophy is, “Failure itself is not the key, but the courage to admit it and to face it will point me to the right direction.”

Most of the patients in the ICU are in coma, or with endotracheal tubes. At times, I would get loss by routinely dealing with them and think it is just a job. I would tell myself that they are just patients with no interactions. But when I walk into the visitors waiting room, I heard the doctors explain the situation to the patient’s family members and friends, I realized that the patients all have feelings and with warm human bodies. Gradually, my passion to the nursing profession increased. As my heart warmed, it warms up the patients and their family, and their friends. This type of human touch is getting into my professional growth.



Male Nurse Diary

**Ko Chung-Yao,
Registered Nurse,
Surgical Ward,
Hualien Tzu Chi
Hospital**

Swimming Toward the Nursing Ocean

After graduated from middle school, I didn't know what I wanted to do next. I didn't want to go to regular high school, so I picked up an application for Tzu Chi vocational training. But I still didn't know what I want to do. My family saw the application had Tzu Chi University of Science & Technology(TCUST)'s nursing field and commented, "Tzu Chi has a good reputation, go to Tzu Chi." Without second thought, I went to Hualien to study nursing and started my nursing career.

At first, I had no idea about "Nursing". I thought it was only to perform injection and administer medicine. After reading the curriculum, I realized it wasn't that simple. The courses include Psychology, basic Nursing, Anatomy, Pathology, and Critical Care, etc. Also, studying at school is so much different than the actual internship when I realized the skills and theories that I learned from school were different from real practice at the hospital. When we were at school, we used mannequins (dummy) to practice. Even if we made a mistake, we could do it again and again. But the hospital is a different story. We face real





patients whose temperaments and sentiments allow little tolerance for mistakes.

I still remember when I was an intern; I was very nervous. I even wished my classmate would measure the patient's blood pressure for me. I felt like a newborn fish facing a big ocean. I was very scared. During my internship, the teachers were constantly accompanying us, carefully checked the medicine and our necessary skills. The teachers were also with us to explain to the patients. If we didn't do good job at first, the teachers would always be there to help us accomplish the task.

During the phase of nursing training, I really appreciated my teacher Pan Chao-Kuei. Because of her teaching and inspiration, we realized that nursing was for both physical and mental conditions. After a series of internships in the departments of obstetrics, pediatric, psychiatric, public health, and trauma, I finally established some knowledge that associated with the theories which I have learned from school. I was able to apply the knowledge to the patients during my internship. The practices also enhanced my understanding of the theories that I learned from the books.

As I progressed to senior years, pressure and stress increased. I was lucky to have met teacher Lee Chung-Jen, who would always invite us to go out for some exercises to release stress and helped us understand classwork. He helped us understand difficult theories with easy approaches. Our lead teacher Lee Tze-Ying always treated us like her own children. She always listened patiently to our complaints, and then offered us the

positive energy to continue our journey in nursing.

When we reached the last session of our internship, we didn't have any teacher to guide us but the senior nursing staff to lead us. Not only had we learn from patients we chose, but also patients the senior nursing staff were assigned. At first, I was a bit nervous; luckily, the senior nursing staff all was always very kind to guide us. Although the unit that I chose was overly busy, the lead nurse would explain to me what I needed to improve and taught me the knowledge about diseases whenever there was opportunity. I noticed that even



though the unit was busy, the senior nursing staff always helped each other. Thus after the graduation, I chose this unit to continue my nursing career.

Being a male, I had to serve in the military where I was assigned to a military hospital. I didn't know where my courage came from; I volunteered to go to the emergency room. Then there was a series of the emergency and patient care training. When I started the service, I didn't know in what condition the next patient would be, it was a very fast pace. A patient could walk in, and then fainted all of a sudden. I still remembered my first encounter with a patient who needed CPR. I forgot everything that I learned. Luckily, the lead nurse didn't scold me, but taught me the steps and theories of emergency and how to handle it. Thus, after my shift, I would practice in my head the whole process of emergency situation. I also encountered many emergency cases after that, I was able to handle the patients and saw the heart beats bounced back. When the team saved a patient, the joy was indescribable.

After I had completed my military service, my role was reverted back to the workplace and I started to lead younger staff members. I not only needed to take care of my patients, but also teach younger student nurses. Although I may not be as good as my mentor, I am working hard toward that goal. I continue to work hard and enrich my nursing knowledge. It is always a great joy to see a patient get well and go home. Now when people ask me my occupation, I would always answer them proudly, "I am a nurse."

Heartwarming Experience at Toughest Time in Life

By Hsu Kai-Ting, 9B Ward Registered Nurse, Taichung Tzu Chi Hospital



Many cancer patients say to me, “When I face suffering, I have a feeling in my heart - there is no difference between the rich and the poor in this situation.”

When pain occurs, people walk into the hospital. For 365 days a year and 24 hours a day, they closely spend time with us - the first-line nurses. So, I often ask myself besides nursing care, what else can I provide them? What is our value?

A patient I nicknamed “Old Mr. Mo”, who felt like being reborn after out of his plight, gave me the answer.

Accompany Mr. Mo to Walk Out of Sickness and Live Confidently

In 2015 Old Mr. Mo was hospitalized as a tongue cancer patient. He was scheduled for a whole-day cancer surgery, an operation

collaborated by Otorhinolaryngology and Plastic surgery units. Since it requires longer time to complete, he was scheduled for the first one on that day. Old Mr. Mo's emotion was normal when he was first hospitalized. But on the day of the surgery, he suddenly started crying, and tightly held-on the quilt and pillow. We couldn't pull him out of the bed. He kept saying he didn't want to have the surgery. We had to inform his attending physician, Dr. Chou Yi-Fan, to suspend the operation and tried to understand his condition.

After having a talk with Old Mr. Mo, we began to understand his life story and his worries. After the 921 Earthquake (the disastrous one happened in Taiwan 1999), young Mr. Mo got divorced, and he also experienced the death of his son, due to bullies during his service in the army. His life was struck hard. Ten plus years passed. When he



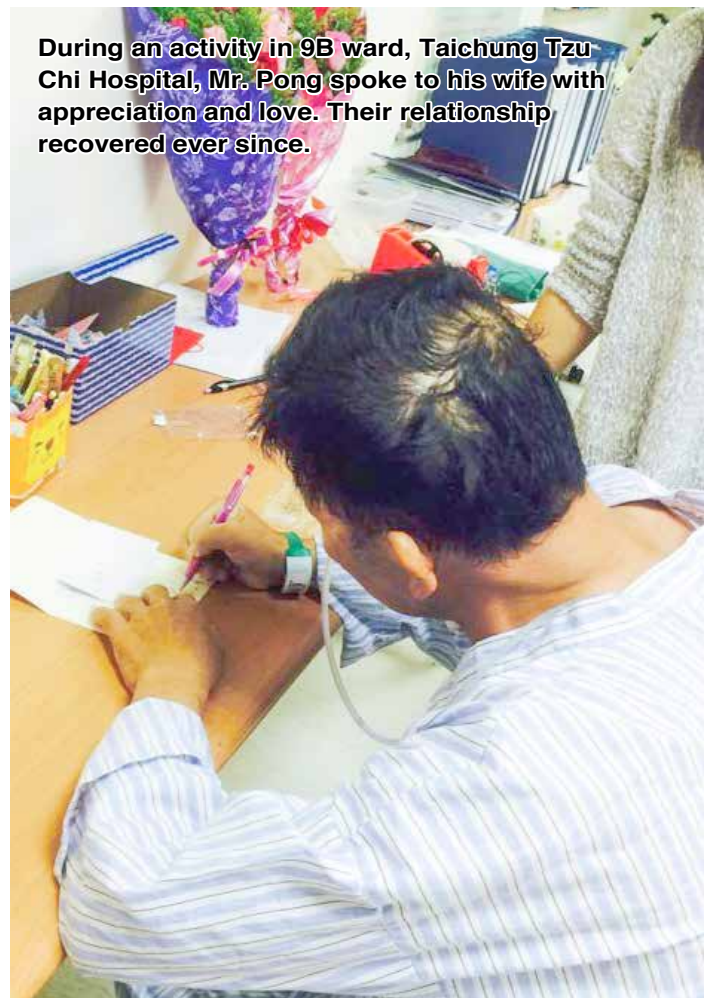
Photo depicts Old Mr. Mo received the certificate from the ward that he finally finished the whole treatment process. And his hand-made craft decoration for the ward and the nursing station.



found something strange in his mouth, he first had a check-up at the hospital in Puli, Nantou County. The doctor in Puli told him he needed to go to a big hospital. However, he chose not to face it. He comforted himself by thinking it was no big deal, what he needed to do was go to a pharmacy and get some medicine. He took pain killers, and applied ointment to his mouth. After two to three months, the condition worsened. Then, he came to Taichung Tzu Chi Hospital.

What he feared most was after surgery without his tongue. How could he make a living? Would he die in the operation room? He was very afraid of these uncertainties. After learning why he refused operation, we requested help from social workers. The team gave him a full explanation of what would happen after the operation and what the team will provide to help him. He then felt relieved and had the surgery. After the operation, he had chemotherapy six times, and 30 doses of radiation. It was tough during several months' treatment. We were with him all the way through.

We discovered that Old Mr. Mo is talented; he was very good at crafts. So, we setup the ward as his display area. I invited him to the ward nursing station and said, "You



During an activity in 9B ward, Taichung Tzu Chi Hospital, Mr. Pong spoke to his wife with appreciation and love. Their relationship recovered ever since.

look around, if you find any spot boring here, please help us decorate it, every time you come here.” Therefore, he decorated the ward and our nursing station beautifully with his handcrafts.

Every time after chemo and radiation treatment, he would spend his free time doing some handcrafts. Old Mr. Mo was a person without much confidence. But I noticed his words were influential. When patients, who had treatment at the same period of time like him, were in troubles, I would tell him, “Someone needs help, please go talk to him.” We want him share his own feelings and experiences in order to help other patients have better understanding. Old Mr. Mo later realized his strength. Therefore, after a few times interacting with patients, I found him proactively “patrolling” the wards room by room. He asked patient friendly, “How do you feel today?” “You have mouth sores? That’s okay.” He became confident and a role player for other patients.

When he was certain of his strength, he started helping others. He knew he was capable of doing something. Mr. Pong was a patient who was deeply influenced by Old Mr. Mo. Also a tongue cancer patient, he was having treatment at the hospital while Old Mr. Mo’s treatments about to be over.

Helping Patients Reconcile with Family

Mr. Pong was a dominating and traditional Taiwanese man. And his wife was a traditional woman who was hard-working but unappreciated.

During Mr. Pong’s agonizing treatment process, he treated his wife even more badly. He was suffering and put his wife in a more difficult situation.

One day Mrs. Pong was crying in the tea room. She said, “I have done so much. I can’t do it anymore. He keeps scolding me. I want to go back to Pingtung. He rebuked me again. I don’t want to face him.” After releasing her emotion, she brought divorce papers to Mr. Pong.

“Sign the paper. I have been with you for 60 years. My relation with you ends here,” said Mrs. Pong.

“Sign what? What are you talking about?” Mr. Pong ignored her.

After work, I went to talk to Mr. Pong and asked him, “How do you feel after 60 years marriage with your wife? Is she important to you?” “Important or not, she knows”, he said.

“How could she know if you didn’t tell her? Do you love her?” I asked.

“Very much,” he replied.

I asked, “Why didn’t you say it?”

He replied, “Ah, I just couldn’t say it!”

Mr. Pong is hard to utter the word “love”. I wondered what to do?

Every Christmas eve we have a Christmas carol activity at the ward. My colleagues and I were thinking how we could help them by using this occasion. We knew, in fact, they rely on each other very much.

We bought flowers and dressed-up Mr. Pong like as a prince. We told him, “You couldn’t say it, but write it down.” We asked him to write down his love for his wife. We helped him to show his gratitude and regrets to his wife in public. The whole night, his wife acted like a little girl, “I have never received a flower in my life. I am overjoyed today,” she said. She smiled shyly. The night ended happily.

Next morning, during the treatment, I asked Mr. Pong, “Your wife is in a tough situation. Did you sign the paper? Life is too tough on your wife.” He did not speak. His face looked very serious. But his wife uttered, “Nothing! What paper? There is no paper!” I found their divorce paper underneath the breakfast tray.



Hsu Kai-Ting learned the values of nursing from patients. The happiest thing is to see them back to normal life and give back the society with positive energy.

Alive Is Good; Return with Love

From being hospitalized to discharge and until now, Old Mr. Mo looked like a totally different person. He said after our successful treatment, he had only one feeling - it is wonderful to be alive. “It was just like being reborn again,” he said, “We should listen to the doctors and nurses. Then we can find a way to work out the difficulty.” Before, he was selling noodles for a living. Not long after he was discharged from the hospital and went back to Puli and started a normal life. Old Mr. Mo, showing me his change of life, is like my teacher, also like a friend, mostly like a family member.



In 2017, Hsu Kai-Ting(right) spent her own leisure time to visit Old Mr. Mo(left) in Puli. Old Mr. Mo said the butterflies and bees on his hands are symbol of his “Rise from hardship.

Mo and Mr. Pong are planning to make a PSA (public service announcement) film to tell young people what kind of sufferings will happen during oral cancer treatment, telling them it is better not to smoke, drink or chew bethel nuts (areca nut palm.).

Our ward admits patients from the ENT department. There was a patient who said, “We are a group of people who do not have throats, tongues, cheeks, and chins.” It was heart wrenching to hear that. It is hard to look at the pain of the patients. I thank them for their willingness to tell me about their past. Through our expertise, we can alleviate their physical suffering, and furthermore being able to reconcile with themselves and families. The most important thing is to return them to the community, back to life and be able to give. To give back their love and resources back to the society. For me, my value is to help patients to return to their life, to create their own good energy. I hope that I can release kindness and use my professional skills to help people in suffering, as well as solace for the aching hearts.

What is the value of being a nurse? I realized it from Old Mr. Mo, Mr. Pong and other patients.

Old Mr. Mo made flying butterflies and bees out of straws and papers. It is a symbol of his rebirth from hardship. He said that years ago when his son died, he was touched by the religious chanting performed by Tzu Chi volunteers for his son funeral service. He couldn't imagine after those wasted years, he could become a useful person who could do something to give back the society.

After discharged, Mr. Pong said he doesn't scold his wife anymore. He is a traveling bus driver. He said, “Now, when I hold my steering wheel, my heart feels open and happy.” He often thought about how to help people while driving. Old Mr.



PLEASE LISTEN TO ME, DEAR HEAD NURSE

In-Service Education Program for a Novice Nurse



Just a blink of an eye, I had already been a nurse for a whole year.

A Two-Year Nursing Program at Dalin

I remember when I was studying at a five-year nursing school, I was worrying whether I should continue my study at college or go to work. Coincidentally, at Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital I found an in-service education program provided by Tzu Chi University of Science and Technology. Teachers from Hualien (in eastern Taiwan) will come to Dalin (southern Taiwan) to teach nurses who work at the hospital. At that moment I was amazed by this kill-two-birds-with-one-stone program which fully satisfied my need. Therefore, without any hesitation I signed a contract with Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital.

Knowing I will work at Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital after graduation, during the five internship courses in nursing school, I chose them all at Dalin. During the internship I worked extra hard and tried to remember whatever I learned. So, even after I became a formal staff and assigned to a unit I had never worked at, I was already familiar with the environment.

Novice Wanted Further Education; Just Opened Mouth and Asked

Before checking in with the hospital, I contemplated how to tell my Head Nurse (HN) that I wanted continuing education. I have thought of many ways to deliver the message. I was afraid that my HN would think that I was arrogant and had no manners. After all, who would request to work and study at the same time on the first day of work. Anyway, this was the reason I chose this hospital to work at. This included my life planning and self-expectation.

When I met HN on the first day of the work, I felt she was not serious at all as a supervisor. She cheerfully introduced herself to us. However, in my mind what I really cared was if I could continue studying. So, after she finished introducing herself, she then asked us our expectation working at 10A ward. Although my mind was struggling, I was able to force myself to ask a tough question: "Can I study while working?"

Archiving Credits Step by Step; Receiving Full Support from the Unit

My HN Hu was first stunned for a moment. But she then immediately praised my thought of continuing education. She then said, "There are two nurses in our unit taking classes, it will be difficult to arrange the shifts if you also take classes. Plus, you are inexperienced now. Can you take care of the work and study at the same time?"

I answered, "I want to study part-time first, then full-time after I am more experienced in my work." She gave her consent right away. I was surprised but thrilled. She said,



“Your commitment to advance knowledge is great. If I can find a way for you, then, of course, you can do it. Your suggestion should not put too much stress on yourself; and you can also get yourself accommodated to the job better. However, if you encounter any difficulties or feel hard to adjust, you must let me know. Don’t make yourself too exhausted.”

I have been working for a year, and also going to school. I do classes on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Whenever HN Hu saw me, she would ask, “Was it too tiring and too stressful? Can you take it?” I replied jokingly, “Ask no more! I am fine. If there is anything you can do to help, I will ask.” Although I said to her that some issues were a bit annoying, in my heart I was actually warmed by her remarks. She made me feel even a novice can also have the privilege of pursuing further education.

HN Hu has given me such precious opportunity. For not letting her down, I worked hard to do my work well. I couldn’t let HN and the seniors feel I didn’t take my work seriously. Good thing was I got along very well with the seniors. HN Hu was supportive and often showed me her concerns and encouragement.

While working and studying at the same time, I spent most of my free time on taking classes. But one great thing was whenever I needed time for my family, vacations or rescheduled classes, HN Hu always tried to adjust the work schedules in order to meet everyone’s need. HN Hu is like our big sister who solves all sorts of problems for us. I am so lucky to have her to look after us and become part of this big family. I have never gone to work with a long face. Every day I brought my positive energy to the unit. I think attitude and thoughts are essential. My mom said, “I have never seen a new employee goes to work so joyfully.” It is true that the work is very demanding. There are many things to learn. But the chief nurse always attentively listens to every colleague. She is not only leading people but also their hearts. She tries to solve everyone’s problems. The senior nurses I work with were always collaborative with one another and helped solving my questions. Colleagues who started working at the same time with me were always cheerful with one another while sharing good and bad times together. So, I have no reason to be afraid of going to work. On the other hand, I enjoy the time and hard work with everyone.

The Heartwarming Moments Experienced at Work

On the third day of my work, an old male patient I learned to take care of passed away. I saw my senior nurse were busy around; and the family of the deceased contacted their relatives tearfully. HN Hu led me to change clothes for the deceased and removed all the tubes from his body. I am a person who cries easily. Plus, hearing HN Hu repeatedly called out to the deceased: “There is no more pain. You can go without worries...” and



Head Nurse, Hu Yu-Chuan teaching Chen Ju some skills.

saw my senior nurse comforting the family. My eyes started turning blurry. Then I cried loudly with the family. Although I told myself not to tear, but the tears couldn't help pouring down.

Afterwards, HN Hu reviewed with me all the procedures that need to be followed when taking care of terminal patients. I feel grateful that HN Hu always personally demonstrates the tasks as well as doing things with us. She made me feel that she is not only taking care of patients and their families physically but also mentally. These heartwarming moments are something I cannot learn at school or from books.

Ask When in Doubt; Learning the Skills with Courage

During clinical practices, there are always questions about the difficulties of nursing and associated techniques. But I am not afraid to ask. After all, what we look after are human lives. Therefore, I would ask if there are some problems that I couldn't find the causes. The senior nurses would explain to me patiently. Sometimes, when they are busy, I would ask HN Hu who is very knowledgeable. She could always make



Chen Ju thanks Head Nurse Hu for reminding her to be a nurse who can resolve problems.



me fully understand by explaining using the cause and effect in Buddhism terms. I remember after probationary period, I needed to work independently but I panic and felt helpless. HN Hu was there to remind me to prioritize tasks that could be done simultaneously, and not wasting time on trivial matters. She also guided me how to write a complete clinical report.

I remember there was a period of time I often failed inserting IV on patients. The unit was Rheumatology. The veins of patients are normally very hard to find and to insert. I didn't want to always bother other nurses for fear of interrupting their duties. Therefore, wearing a thick skin, I went to HN Hu's office for help.

"HN Hu, I couldn't insert the IV, I have injected..."

Before I finished my words, she asked, "Did you try your best?"

I nodded my head with embarrassment.

She then said, “It is okay, as long as you have tried your best. I will go to do it with you.”

She held my hands and walked to the patient, then explained to the patient, “Chen Ju, she is new to the job, but she tries very hard. I believe her skill will be very good later. I hope you can understand.”

After the explanation, the patient was forgiving. But some people couldn’t accept it. Sometimes, before I was able to find the veins, they had already called the other senior nurses to do it for them. HN Hu could always use her own ways to convince patients to give the novice a chance, which encourage me to advance my skills.

Appreciate HN’s Encouragement; Feel Joyful about Progress in Clinical Practice

Whenever HN Hu performed IV on patients, I would look at her with admiration. She said I was overreacting. She told me to practice more to get used to it. She taught me some techniques that I need to pay attention to. After many observations, I finally learned some tricks and gradually improved my skill. She often recognized my progress which enhanced my confidence to be better.

One time, a patient held my hand and told me, “I feel my sickness is reduced by a half whenever I saw your smiling face.” I love to be a nurse. Many patients often looked sad and down. But if we greet them with our warm-heartedness, even a serious person will open-up and return us with smiles. Being sick is actually very painful, getting stuck in the hospital and feeling bored. If they can feel warmth with our care, all the hard work is worthy.

There was a national hospital accreditation process in June. Every morning HN Hu would review the whole process to help us better remember all the main points. I was not nervous during the assessment being asked by judge members. Because what they asked were the things I did all the time. Also, with HN Hu’s assistance, I faced it with ease. After the accreditation, everyone got together and celebrated. It was wonderful to see this after all the hard work.

Reflecting my short nursing career, there were hard times filled with achievements and joyfulness. Until now, I have no regret of being a nurse. Instead, I feel lucky and grateful. There were remarks from HN Hu that were deeply imprinted in my mind: “Don’t just act like a tool, be a nurse who can discover problems, and be able to resolve them.”

I will always remind myself of my original resolve to be a nurse. I expect myself to advance and become an intelligent, independent and kind Angel.



PLEASE LISTEN TO ME, DEAR HEAD NURSE

From Head Nurse:

With Unit Member, Heart to Heart Encounter

Hu Yu-Chuan, Head Nurse, 10A Ward, Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital



I have been in Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital for 17 years. It has become my other hometown. This simple place has accompanied my youthful years, and here I learned the happiness of helping people and being helped.

I love my work as a nurse, speaking from my heart.

“I love my work” summarizes my ten plus years of being a nurse. This is what I said to the committee members during my evaluation. It came directly from my heart.

The interaction with patients has given me a sense of accomplishment. Caring for patients is the greatest happiness in my work. I am grateful to see them discharged from hospital. From the previously ignorant little nurse, I am now able to see from my colleagues' perspective. When you have the ability to help others, you feel that you are needed and being valued.

Every Defeat Is a Learning Opportunity

I remember when I first became a nurse, I encountered the biggest setback. During the first six months working at the hospital, I encountered a patient's vomiting blood in the middle of the night and I ran away in panic. Later, that patient passed away due to excessive blood loss, and the family filed suit. At the time, I faced the biggest setback in my life; however, the hospital took very good care of us. I was unable to face family



Hu Yu-Chuan took the frustration and setback while becoming a nurse as a necessary process for growth. After becoming a unit head nurse, she found that she should accompany new nurses for their well-being.



members so the unit Head Nurse then came to my rescue. I learned a lesson and I remind every new nurse to treat every setback as a growing-up experience.

Teaching New Grads with Accompanying

The most difficult thing for new grads to adjust is the transition from campus to the workplace. They need to adjust themselves to the new pressure. I pay close attention to their moods and encourage them, if needed. I ask about their daily lives like a nagging mother and of course take them out to eat sometimes. It is a good method for relaxation.

During the process of leading the new staff, seniors are not only teacher and coordinator, but also life counselor. They pay attention to their learning and at



Head Nurse Hu Yu-Chuan often encourages new staffs not to be afraid of stress, because there are always senior staffs and supervisors behind them.

the same time take initiative to care for them, and accompany them through the most difficult initial three months period. However, given that current newcomers' resistance toward stress is not as good as before, I often tell the senior staff to give them at least six months to adjust based on individual and personal circumstance.

I often encourage newcomers that the staff and managers are with them. Regardless of how difficult or enormous the problem, there are always senior staff behind them as support.

Many young nurses would cry when patients pass away. I said to them, "This is our blessing. When a patient is at the end of the life journey, we have to be grateful. Maybe one day we will go early. How to live the present moment is the most important thing. This is the most important lesson of life and I hope they will understand. We must be content, grateful, so as to create more blessings."

Seeing the Qualities of My Colleagues and Cultivates Positively

Chen Ju is the one of the non-newbie liked individuals that I have mentored, whether it is her productivity or attitude towards work. Initially she made a striking impression because her name is the same as the mayor of Kaohsiung. In addition, when she reported to our department, she took the initiative to want to learn a second skill, which is not easy because newcomers must go through a trial period and attend classes simultaneously. Furthermore, due to the shortage of staff, scheduling was difficult. However, I felt that her wanting to further her skills was commendable and I wanted to help her. After coordination, Chen Ju proposed to complete the prerequisites in advance in order to spend less time in class. Finally, she completed her studies and became the first newbie to advance in the hospital.

Chen Ju is positive. With this national hospital accreditation, I felt the stress being a senior too, let alone a newcomer who just joined us in less than a year. She is what I considered as an "elite" member. Regardless whether it is an evaluation or teaching assessment, we always ask the newcomers. Her response was, "No problem! Bring it on!" I asked her why she was not afraid, she said, "Fear is no use. What's going to come will come. I just have to be ready." I found her attitude admirable. Later during the accreditation, she was picked by the judge members to answer question. Her response and performance was also very good. I always encourage her to attempt different opportunities: be it a specialist nurse or a managerial type position. I hope she will remain on the job, and continue to provide good nursing care.



PLEASE LISTEN TO ME, DEAR TEACHER



Though with Osteocarcinoma, Transferred to Nursing Dept. and Stick with the Goal

Parting the Soccer Field and encountering Loving Care while in the Hospital

A serious illness in my childhood came as a turning point in my life. It changed my attitude towards life. I used to love jogging under the sun because my lifelong goal is in sports. However, I had to withdraw from a soccer team right before the last game during elementary school after being diagnosed with malignant osteosarcoma, also known as bone cancer. My tibia was infected and had to be treated immediately. All of a sudden, I had to retire from soccer. I was wheeled into a cold operating room for surgery, followed with a series of chemotherapies. Despite the ill fortune, the care I received from the medical staff touched my soul. They showered me with love as if I was their own child and a close family member. I finally understand how people can truly give and ask for nothing in return even for a total stranger. For the two years in hospital, their encouragement prepared me for the life challenges ahead.

Desire to Serve Patients with a Nursing Major Delayed Graduation

Radiology was my major (Department of Medical Imaging and Radiological Science) when I first started at Tzu Chi University of Technology & Science (TCUST). My initial plan was to get a job related to medical care at a hospital so that I could help people. When I learned that the Nursing Department was accepting transfer students, I started to consider changing my plan. I realized that “nursing” brings me warmth and inspires me to grow so that I can share my affection to children like myself who was on the receiving end in the past.



The transfer process is complicated and it likely extends my time to graduate. I was going to be a third-year student, after the transfer, my graduation will likely delay for two more years. I consulted with many people and most of them recommended me to stay put because nursing is a tough profession. What concerned me most is to regret for not taking the chance. At the end, I followed by feelings and made the decision to transfer.

Gratitude towards Mentors for Guidance and On-time Graduation

After the transfer, my class advisor, Professor Chuang Jui-Ling was very helpful. When I was running around like a headless chicken, she monitored my grades and helped me pick the courses. She knew my story so she did her best to help me stay on course. She guided me to navigate the curriculum to graduate on-time.

During my transfer application, I was interviewed with the Department Chief. She only asked me the reason for a nursing major. I told her my experience and the reason; she approved my application right away. It was not until I attended some of her classes that I appreciated even more for her dedication to students. One time, she asked me my well-being, "Are you feeling better? Are you able to follow the pace of the course?" Her caring remarks were my main motivation to work hard in class.

My third and fourth year class advisor Prof. Yang Chun-Tien was also a good mentor. Due to transferring major, I often need more credits than my classmates. There were usually many documents and forms that need to be approved and submitted. Even with the additional paperwork, my teacher was committed to help me graduate on time. They went beyond the call of duty to nurture us as if we were their own. In order not to take for granted their loving care, I shall work hard to fulfill their expectations.

A Nursing Journey - Foster Lifelong Learning

It has been two years, going to the third, since I transferred from radiology, an equation-filled with physics and chemistry, to nursing. Although the journey has been challenging, it actually supplements growth in the future. Sometimes I ponder: "Had I stayed in radiology, I would've graduated by now." Nevertheless, I have no regrets because I know my goals and I am marching towards them steadily.

People said that university study is like "Four Years of Play" - the course work lightens as you migrate to senior years. Initially, I was not used to the demand when the course load increased as I moved toward my last few years. However, after a

After starting at the Tzu Chi University of Science & Technology, Weng Zhen-Guo has been active in school activities as a goodwill ambassador. Photo shows his work in Myanmar to participate in a children's play, distribute charity goods and immerse in the local culture.



while, I was used to the “demanding yet productive” lifestyle. This is what nursing is all about – endless lifelong learning and improving in continuous clinical practices. Only when we continue to learn and grow would we be able to keep up with the modern demand. What we learn today could very well become an ancient history by tomorrow. That has been my profound understanding and takeaway in nursing.



**Supported by Willpower;
Internship and Exams Challenge the Mind and Body**

My family was not very supportive of my decision to transfer because my health is not suited for a job that demands prolonged standing. Since my illness at twelve, I received an artificial joint replacement on my right leg; my family is opposed to anything that could

harm my legs. I recognize their concerns and it took a few convincing discussions before they come to terms with my decision.

It was not until the fourth year of continuous clinical practices, I appreciate the importance of a healthy body. Due to the demand of prolonged standing and walking, the long hours of class work, and accumulated stress and exhaustion, my body was showing signs of strain. I don't think my body is worse than others, but the inherent medical condition is a great concern. After rounds of chemotherapies and procedures, my body was scarred. I rely on willpower to stay strong for my dream and for the choice I made. I believe all nursing students have their own personal motivation and determination to keep them going. Nursing is about empathy and love. It demands endless passion and joy. I think that is the power that supports nursing students through their journeys.

Step by Step; Care for the body and mind

The fourth year internship marks the beginning of a milestone in my life. After a series of clinical studies and internships, I observed and learned from those experiences. Life is full of impermanence and hope. I learned the interpersonal skills and the vicissitudes of life. Internship is demanding. Not only do I have to face the pressure from senior classmates, professors and patients' family members, I also have to deal with reports, documents and medications after work. These are tremendous stress that may cause some to breakdown and become depressed. I remember I was having a hard time during internship and I asked the teacher a question, "What if I lost my passion in nursing?" She replied, "Well, then it's lost." I was shocked by her response. She continued, "There are always ups and downs in life; sometimes you feel happy and sometimes you feel sad. Passion is not forever. You may burnout one day. If you feel stagnant because of a temporary slump, then take some time off. What's more important than passion is your goal. With goal comes motivation, with motivation comes harvest, and with harvest comes determination."

I often think we misuse "nursing" to limit ourselves, to give us stress. My internship teacher said we study nursing to protect lives. Instead, we put nursing care under the microscope, giving ourselves unnecessary stress and turmoil. Our job is to educate ourselves and not be caught in the ideal of nursing and jeopardize our nursing potential. Once I come to terms with that thought I reached a deeper level of understanding for nursing. Nursing is not just caring for others; we must first care for ourselves. How can you care for others when you can't even take care of yourselves? Solving this conundrum, I am now more determined to realize my nursing goal.



Giving Is a Precious Opportunity; Passion to Spread Love and Kindness

A person experiences explosive growth when placed in a pressured environment. Pressure prompts motivation which triggers responsibility. When you achieve something on your own, the sense of accomplishment is many times larger. When you receive praises from others, the joy you get is genuine. There is nothing more rewarding than hearing the family member of a patient say, "Thank you for all your hard work." When you see them heal and discharged from the hospital, knowing that you have taken good care of them, you realize that was your original passion and intent. I remind myself that I was once a patient receiving care and now I must grasp the opportunity to reciprocate and



Weng Zhen-Guo was promoting "111 World Vegetarian Awakening Day" and asking students to join the movement.



After learning about the Nursing Department is accepting transfer students, Weng Zhen-Guo decided to take the chance. He appreciates the Professor who reminded him to keep up with the course pace and take supplemental credits.

care for others. Good or bad, they are what motivate me to stay in the nursing profession.

For the future, I believe everything has its orders. Things happen in life for a reason. No matter what the challenges are, we must overcome obstacles and not be overwhelmed by them. Always remember your initial resolve. It is important to hold on to passion with a passionate heart, I will excel in nursing. I hope I will serve in the children's hematology department and apply my own experience to help comfort patients through their cancer treatments. Perhaps I can also cultivate the seeds of love in their hearts that one day will grow and spread.

Tzu Chi Volunteers with Hearty Support for Medical Staff to Count On

By Hsiao Chun-Hua, Nursing Assistant, Outpatient Clinic, Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital

“Doctors, White coat Angels, it’s past one o’clock in the afternoon and there are still patients waiting to be examined. You must be hungry? Before you continue working, try some homemade pan-fried dumpling buns we made while they are still warm!” “Oh, White coat Angel, you are so kind and treat the elders so nicely. What a compassionate heart!” These are typical praises and scenes you encounter at the Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital Outpatient Clinic Department. The Tzu Chi volunteers are cheerful and encourage us when we feel exhausted and frustrated or down. They motivate us to stay committed to our work. Many times, we were too busy to remember their names or to properly show our appreciation, but we are grateful for their support. Last year, when a well-loved volunteer was hospitalized for terminal cancer, many of the younger nurses who had received the caring attention from that volunteer sister, came to visit her in the hospital. When the news of her passing was heard, all were sobbing at the outpatient clinic. Some junior nurse who was off work even attended her memorial service to express her gratitude. This connection was deeper than any typical relationship between a hospital volunteer and the medical staff.

“Volunteers” has been one of the most impressive features of Tzu Chi Hospitals. Tzu Chi commissioners view the Tzu Chi Hospitals as their home and would take turns to go “home” to help. In Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital, this effort started from the hospital construction fundraising event until now, and it has never stopped. When you walk into the lobby of the hospital, you can see the friendly and smiley volunteers. Master Cheng Yen describes

the Tzu Chi medical volunteers as “Hospital’s Software Support Body”. Every corner of the hospital is filled with their presence and serves as the warm and strong backup to the medical staff. The Outpatient Clinic services about four thousands patients a day. Volunteers guide the visitors through the process of registration, check-in, and help prepare to measure height, weight and blood pressure. The visitors rely on the volunteers for direction on where to go, how to pay and fill prescribed medication, etc. Volunteers also serve tea and snacks for those who may be frustrated due to pain or the long wait time. They listen to the visitors’ concerns, provide their care and comfort. They are an indispensable member of the outpatient team.

In addition, Tzu Chi volunteers treat every hospital staff as their own children. Every department at the Tzu Chi Hospital has a Tzu Cheng Dad and Yi De Mom (also known as Tzu Chi Moms and Dads), including the outpatient department. On Tzu Yi Day of the month, Tzu Chi Moms and Dads wake up early to prepare a delicious and nutritious vegetarian breakfast for us. Warmth radiate through our body and our hearts when we held the breakfast in our hands. During the morning meeting of the Tzu Yi Day, Tzu Chi



Taipei Tzu Chi outpatient clinic nurses show appreciation and gratitude to Tzu Chi medical volunteers, and to all the patients and their family members.



Tzu Chi volunteer Moms pay a visit to a nurse's family member during hospitalization.

Moms and Dads will share Tzu Chi news including what the rest of the Tzu Chi members in the world have contributed to Taiwan. They explain the history and intent behind the Lunar Year-End Blessing Prayer Service, Bathing Buddha Ceremony, Fortune Day, Dharma Fragrance, Tzu Chi Monthly Publication and other activities. They also hold large parties one or two times a year for us. Tzu Chi Moms and Dads, like magicians, whipped out ten to twenty beautiful, delicious meals along with nutritious soup, dessert and fruit. It could surpass the royal feast. Even those who were not vegetarians enjoy the food and ask coworkers to save them a plate when they cannot get away from their outpatient work.

Taipei Tzu Chi Outpatient clinic is one big family. There are about one hundred staff members working there and thus every part of life, including life, death, joy, anger, sadness and other unpredictable events are all shared amongst the staff members. Tzu Chi Moms and Dads always open their arms and hearts for hugs and comfort. For those staff struggling with family or personal issues, they listen with passion and guide with Dharma Master Cheng Yen's principles to get them through the tough times. If there are staff family member who is hospitalized, everyone will pay them a visit regardless if they stay at the Tzu Chi Hospital or at another medical facility. A coworker's dad, who was staying at another hospital's respiratory room, was delighted to see Tzu Chi Dads and Moms when they paid him and his family a visit. He even managed a thumbs-up gesture with his limited hand mobility. One time, our colleague's family member passed away,

Tzu Chi Dads and Moms attended the memorial services as if they were part of their own. The solemn and genuine gesture touched the grieving family members.

All the medical staff holds a great gratitude for the things that the Tzu Chi Moms and Dads do, and we vow do our job well to reciprocate the love we receive from the Tzu Chi Moms and Dads.

I seemed to remember the reason to build the Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital, aside from helping with the local and suburb residents of the northern area, was to provide care for the greater Taipei's Tzu Chi people. Dharma Master Cheng Yen is concerned for those older volunteers who were part of Tzu Chi from the early years and now may need more medical attention. When you arrive at the Tzu Chi Hospital in Taipei you see quite a bit of the Tzu Chi people from all over Taiwan, ranging from Yilan through Hsinchu, who return for some "maintenance" care. Our outpatient staff treat these patients with the utmost respect as if they were their own elders. At the same time, this older generation of Tzu Chi volunteers continues to give us the loving care and guidance to help us grow. At the Tzu Chi Hospital Outpatient Clinic, this beautiful cycle of love and care will continue to take place.



During the Tzu Chi Hospital fundraiser for disaster victims, volunteer Moms and Dads wholeheartedly join the effort.

Tzu Chi Hospital, Indonesia



On Nov. 11, 2018, the Tzu Chi Hospital, Indonesia held the roof-sealing ceremony.

The hospital site is located next to Jing Si Hall, Jakarta. It covers an area of 2.6 hectares and was planned by Tzu Chi Indonesia started in 2013 and was groundbreaking on May 31, 2015. During construction, TIMA Indonesia held free clinics for workers.

Looking forward to the future, Tzu Chi Hospital, Indonesia will be the first general hospital with marrow stem cells transplant wards in Indonesia and fulfill the mission of "Saving Lives, Safeguarding Health, and Upholding the spirit of Love".