



Taichung

Home Visit by the General
Surgery Team to Show all-round
Concern for the Patient

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Dr. Yu Cheng-Chan, Director of the Division of General Surgery, Taichung Tzu Chi Hospital, paid a home visit to a patient, accompanied by his medical team, on January 15. His patient, a 71-year-old lady surnamed Li, had to undergo total gastrectomy due to cancer. The side-effects of oral chemotherapy which she was switched to last September have resulted in poor appetite and physical frailty. Director Yu therefore scheduled this special house call to show all-round concern for the patient. The team that accompanied Director Yu was composed of Dr. Feng Chi-Hsin of the Department of Chinese Medicine, Case Manager Wu Chun-Chu, Senior Social Worker Chiang Tzu-Meng, Pharmacist Li Chia-Hao, who provided medication advice and health education, Nutritionist Tsai Hsiang-Yu, who offered suggestions for home diets, and Head Nurse Chiu Syue-Ping, who utilized her free time to assist in taking the patient's blood pressure.

When the team entered Ms. Li's home, which is located in Fengyuan



Dr. Yu Cheng-Chan (first right), Director of the Division of General Surgery, Taichung Tzu Chi Hospital, visits Ms. Li in her home, accompanied by his medical team, to show genuine concern

District, they found the elderly lady who is usually amiable and affable sitting in the living room with a gloomy expression. It turned out that she had sprained her lumbar spine in the morning and was in so much pain that she couldn't move. She sat on a chair with a poor complexion, wailing and sighing in agony.

Dr. Feng applied Chinese medicine techniques to alleviate her pain. As she slowly stood up and tossed her crutch in a corner, the other team members looked at him with admiration. He revealed that he had utilized a remote coherent vibration technique to open another channel and thereby mitigate the acute symptoms the patient was experiencing.

As Ms. Li was pain-free, her gloomy expression turned into a smile, and she

exclaimed “I’m so glad you’re here!” The hospitable elderly lady who has been a vegetarian for many years had already prepared a cabbage stew and a “Ten Essence” herbal soup to help her guests dispel the cold. She generously shared the secret of her delicious tonic soup: “It must be served hot and stewed for a long time.” All her non-vegetarian guests were full of praise for this warming and tasty soup.

As they were chatting about their daily family life, Ms. Li’s daughter described the course of her mother’s illness. She recalled that her mother started to experience discomfort swallowing two years ago. After performing gastroscopy, her doctor immediately referred her to a big hospital. After a prolonged process of inquiry with several hospital and consideration of various factors, it was finally decided to transfer her to Taichung Tzu Chi Hospital. She also shared that her kind and warm-hearted mother was extremely delighted about this special visit by the medical team almost 18 months after completion of the course of treatment. The mental support offered by the team was most important to her.

For Nutritionist Tsai this was the second visit. He explains that patients like Ms. Li need more nutrition to make up for the weight loss after total gastrectomy. The patient reported after questioning

that her appetite had improved lately. As a result, her weight had increased from 33 kg to 37 kg and she could eat six meals a day. After inspecting her current nutritional supplements, the nutritionist provided guidance in the correction of misconceptions and the selection of suitable formula with higher protein contents. The calorie count of the recommended products is up to twice as high as that of her current products and



Dr. Feng Chi-Hsin (right) applies Chinese medicine techniques to alleviate Ms. Li’s lumbar spine issues



Nutritionist Tsai Hsiang-Yu (left) and Pharmacist Li Chia-Hao (right) meticulously record the patient's physical status and relevant recommendations.

they have a significantly greater protein content.

Pharmacist Li, who visited the lady for the first time, was aware prior to the visit that the patient had switched to oral chemotherapy only a short time ago. He was therefore well-prepared to educate the patient and her relatives on side-effects associated with these drugs that they might not be familiar with. After questioning the patient, he realized that both Ms. Li and her family members had a clear understanding of the medication. Despite the fact that his expertise was not needed, he expressed great delight at the diligence and determination displayed by the family members. Mr. Li stressed the great importance of the dedicated efforts of the members of

the medical team which is composed of experts in different fields to provide specific patients with the best advice possible, assess medication and dietary routines, show all-round concern for the patient through home visits, and engage in joyful chats on various topics beyond medical science with the ultimate goal of bringing a smile to their faces.

Ms. Chiu Syue-Ping, one of the dedicated nurses in Ward 9A, utilized her free time to participate in this visit. She took the patient's blood pressure at the beginning and end of the visit. Initially, the patient who felt morose and gloomy due to her sprained lumbar spine had a systolic blood pressure over 200 mmHg. Shortly prior to the team's departure, it had dropped to 170, which underscores the relaxing effect of the rest period associated with the visit.

Director Yu further points out that there isn't enough time for sufficient interactions during routine doctor visits and that there is a pressing need for comprehensive enhancement of patient care quality. The enlistment of a nutritionist, a pharmacist, and a Chinese medicine doctor to facilitate the provision of health education, guidance, and care for the patient during this special house call produced excellent results and fully achieved the goal of showing genuine concern for the patient.