



Special
Report

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The 9/18 Earthquake Emergency Rescue at Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital & Recovery Afterwards

By Chang Wen-Yu & Lin Chih-Yi



In fall 2022, as the severe COVID-19 epidemic was finally ebbing, a considerable number of visitors ventured to the Chike and Sixty Stone Mountain area in Yuli and Fuli Townships, Hualien County, during the magnificent tiger lily blooming season to relieve their mental tension surrounded by a golden sea of tiger lilies.

In the same period, two consecutive earthquakes of a magnitude in excess of 6.0 on the Richter scale occurred in Guanshan and Chishang Townships on a weekend on September 17 and 18. No damage and casualties were reported for the first earthquake on Saturday evening. However, the second earthquake of a magnitude of 6.8 on the Richter scale happened on Sept. 18, which struck Chishang on Sunday at 2:44 pm, caused severe and prolonged shaking perceived all over the island. Quite surprisingly, the area hardest hit by the earthquake was not the epicenter in the Taitung area but a quiet little town called Yuli.

Activation of the Mass Casualty Incident Response Mechanism and All-Out Mobilization of Yuli Hospital Personnel

Elusive and unpredictable earthquakes not only give experts all over the world headaches but also frequently cause serious destruction coupled with complicated rescue operations due to



The over 100kg-heavy lead door of the shockwave room of Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital has been knocked down by the powerful earthquake. Fortunately, there are no casualties. Superintendent Chen Yen-Pi on the right.

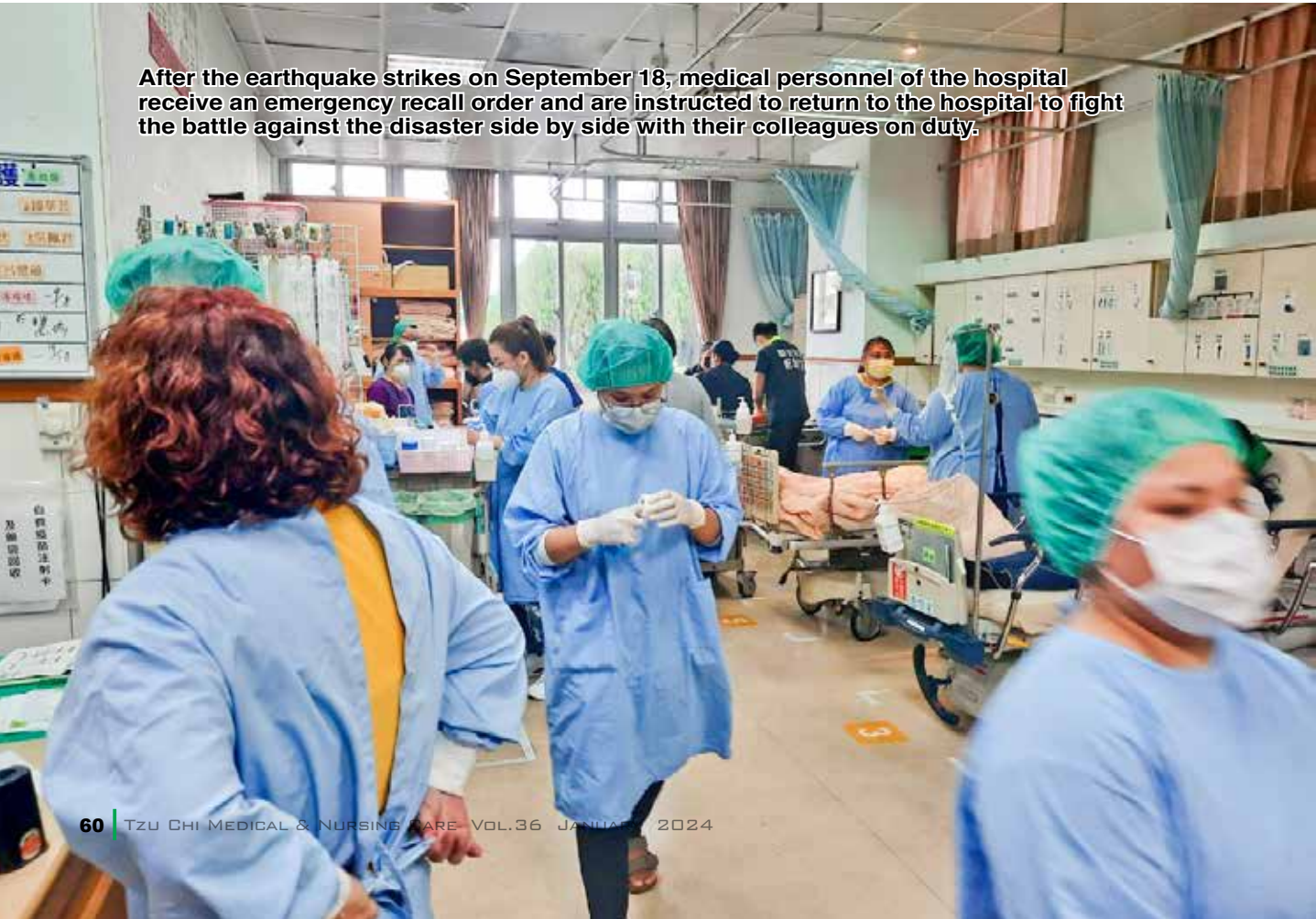
the fact that such disasters are almost impossible to prevent. According to relevant data disclosed on the active fault website in Taiwan, the earthquake that hit Guanshan on the 17th was only a foreshock. The mainshock occurred on the next day in Chishang. Experts determined that the northward extension of the seismogenic fault of the main

tremor on the 18th must have caused the severe destruction in the southern Hualien area.

After the mainshock struck on September 18, a four-story building housing a convenience store collapsed in Yuli. It was reported that people were trapped inside the building. Later on, it was discovered that Kaoliao Bridge in the Hedong Area on County Highway 193 had been broken into several sections resembling building blocks and a vehicle had dropped off the bridge. The main traffic arteria connecting southern to northern Hualien had been cut off. It was also reported that Yuli Bridge had to

be closed to traffic due to the severely damaged surface.

Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital, which is responsible for safeguarding the health in the Provincial Highway 9 area, was notified that a high number of injured citizens would be sent to the hospital in quick succession. The hospital therefore activated its Mass Casualty Incident Response Mechanism at 3:00 pm on September 18. All staff members of the hospital were immediately notified to put off dealing with the toppled and displaced furniture and damage caused by the earthquake in their homes to return to the hospital, which marked the initial



After the earthquake strikes on September 18, medical personnel of the hospital receive an emergency recall order and are instructed to return to the hospital to fight the battle against the disaster side by side with their colleagues on duty.



The earthquake causes tiles of the exterior wall of the Emergency Department of Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital to detach and fall off.

stage of staff recall. Some rapidly arrived at the hospital, while others had to make detours around collapsed roads and bridges and other unpassable obstacles to rush back to the hospital. Regardless of whether they were already on duty or had hurried back to the hospital after being notified or on their own initiative, all staff members immediately proceeded to carry out their designated tasks as they had been trained in regular drills in a spirit of unity, harmony, and mutual assistance. Administrative and general affairs staff confirmed the structural safety of the hospital building through floor-by-floor inspections. Fortunately, the partial damage the building had sustained was determined to be within controllable range. It didn't pose any

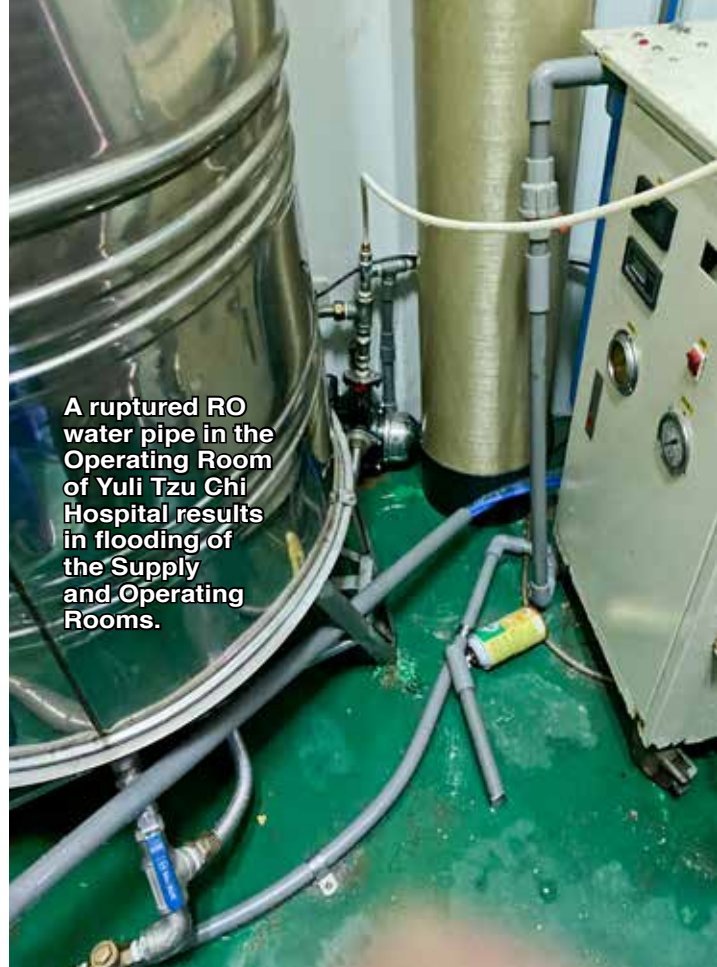
immediate danger and wouldn't impede the dedicated efforts of the hospital to save precious lives and provide direly needed treatment.

As a result of the earthquake, Dr. Chen Yen-Pi, Superintendent of Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital, was trapped in her dormitory room for around 20 minutes due to a toppled bookcase that blocked the door. She kneeled on the floor to move all the books from the shelf to the bed and thereby reduce its weight so she would be able to lift the toppled shelf. After freeing herself, she rushed to the emergency department only to find out that the internal network and phone system were both disconnected and that the Dr. Chin-Lon Lin, CEO of Buddhist Tzu Chi Medical Foundation,

who was deeply concerned about the disaster, had been trying to reach her via different channels to inquire about the damage and casualties caused by the earthquake. After confirming the successful initiation and smooth functioning of the emergency response mechanism, she immediately initiated an inspection tour of the hospital area to assess the damage on each floor. After this tour, she joined the emergency treatment team.

Issuing of the Staff Recall Order and Standby for First-Line Emergency Treatment

“I have never experienced an earthquake of this magnitude over the course of my 26-year career here in Hualien since my graduation from the School of Medicine, Tzu Chi University!” remarks Vice Superintendent Lin Chih-Yen as he recalls this fateful afternoon on September 18. He was on duty in the emergency department when a major earthquake struck, which startled everyone. He shares that he had “just stood up from my chair in front of the computer screen to examine the patient closest to me who had been hurt in an accident and had just received treatment from one of my colleagues. I was roughly five meters away from his bed when I felt the ground shaking as if I was on a boat at sea. When I was finally able to reach



A ruptured RO water pipe in the Operating Room of Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital results in flooding of the Supply and Operating Rooms.

his bed, the intensity of the earthquake increased, and I couldn’t move any further. I even had to steady myself by grabbing onto the patient bed to manage keeping my balance.”

Vice Superintendent Lin points out that several patients had already been admitted to the emergency department when earthquake victims started arriving within several minutes after the tremor hit. It was evident that the earthquake had caused serious destruction. Vice Superintendent Lin therefore issued a staff recall order, marking the first stage of the procedures, and activated the hospital’s Mass Casualty Incident Response Mechanism. At 3:00 pm, Ms. Tung Hui-Hui, the person in charge of staff recall at the Medical Affairs

Section, attempted to notify the hospital staff of the emergency recall order via the designated phone for external communications, but the phone was disconnected. It turned out that all phone lines and network connections of the hospital were disrupted. She therefore switched to her own smartphone to issue the recall order via an internal group on a messaging APP.

Vice Superintendent Lin recalls that “patients kept coming in and we couldn’t catch a breath and think about other things. Patients streamed into the hospital one after another until around 9:00 or 10:00 pm.” After initiation of the Mass Casualty Incident Response Mechanism, Dr. Lin continued to provide medical treatment and first aid without respite. During a short break, he called his family to show concern for their safety in addition to searching for the latest news about the earthquake before again committing himself to treating the injured victims. He adds that “the worst was already behind us when the dispatched support personnel from Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital arrived. They gave us a little breathing room.” Hualien County Health Bureau, the medical team of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital, and even other cities and counties mobilized and dispatched rescue teams to provide assistance after they received news of the destruction and casualties. A group of silent helpers and living Bodhisattvas also rushed to

the hospital. Vice Superintendent Lin points out that “the search and rescue teams successively reached the hospital after the earthquake, but the Tzu Chi volunteers arrived within less than a half hour. They immediately engaged in positive communications with patients in the mild injury area and family members to comfort and pacify them. As a matter of fact, saving lives and caring for patients usually takes up all the attention and energy of healthcare workers during emergencies and extremely busy periods, which is why they have to rely on the support of non-medical personnel for the provision of other services. We were therefore extremely grateful for the



A VIP tea set has been knocked out of a storage cabinet and shattered due to the earthquake in the office on the 7th floor of the hospital.



The earthquake results in objects being scattered all over the floor.



The storage cabinet in the dentistry treatment room has been knocked down and instruments have fallen off the work table.

valuable assistance provided by the Tzu Chi volunteers.”

Post-disaster restoration is a time-consuming process. A large number of patients including an elderly citizen and a mother and daughter who had been trapped in a collapsed convenience store building needed emergency care and treatment. When Kaoliang Bridge broke into several pieces due to the earthquake, a vehicle dropped off the bridge. Freeing the driver and passengers trapped in the vehicle was a very difficult and time-consuming task for the rescue team. After the victims reached dry ground, they were instantly sent to the Emergency Department of Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital since the hospital

had resumed surgery room operations shortly after the earthquake. Despite the fact that the mother and daughter who had been trapped under a collapsed wall of the convenience store building as they passed by their building on a scooter were in stable condition, Vice Superintendent Lin decided to keep them in the hospital for observation and treatment since they had not recovered from the shock yet. It seemed more appropriate to hospitalize them so their wounds would be cared for by professionals.

Vice Superintendent Lin states that in the first week after the disaster there were still a significant number of citizens who had been injured in the earthquake

and were seeking medical advice and treatment in his outpatient clinic. He remarks that “they may have been struck by something during the earthquake or may have suffered bruises and abrasions. Although they were in considerable pain, they were so engaged in their rescue operations that there was no time to go to the hospital. Later on, they realized that stepping or moving caused them pain...” Dr. Lin reaffirms the unwavering commitment of Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital team to treat injured citizens as long as the hospital is intact and no structural safety concerns are detected. He also expresses his deep gratitude for the “camaraderie shown by my colleagues who had been recalled right after the

disaster struck. The hospital has been conducting regular drills for this Mass Casualty Incident Response Mechanism. Some of these drills have covered severe earthquake scenarios resulting in disruptions of surrounding road networks. It never crossed our minds that this would actually happen, and we realized after the earthquake struck that it is quite a challenge to handle such crises in a well-organized manner.”

On-site Commander Keeps Her Calm in the Face of Crisis

In the afternoon of this fateful September 18, Ms. Kuo Ya-Ping, Director of the Nursing Division, and Ms.

The hemodialysis room which is still in the preparatory stage has been flooded due to a ruptured water pipe caused by the earthquake, which resulted in damaged and defective instruments.

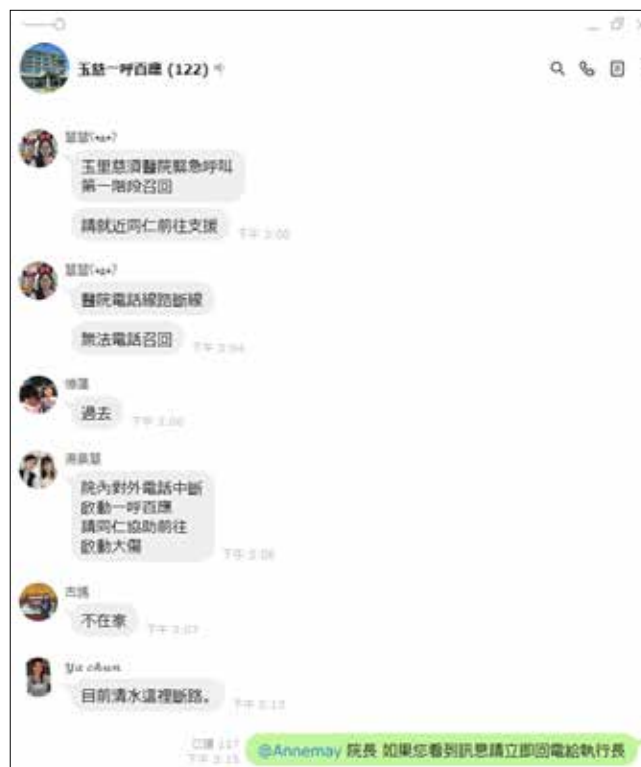


Hsieh Tsai-Lin, Head Nurse at Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital, gave a training course on “24-hour Dementia Care” in the lecture hall on the 7th floor. Director Kuo recalls thinking that this would be a normal Sunday when the ground suddenly started shaking at 1:44 pm.” After the earthquake subsided, Director Kuo proceeded to the big office opposite the hall to conduct inspections after confirming the safety of the training environment and her trainees. She remembers being shocked at the sight of the office which looked like a “debris field. I noticed numerous water leakages when a colleague suddenly stormed out of the kitchen yelling “the gas pipe is ruptured.” I immediately noticed a strong gas smell and was scared out of my wits because there were still a dozen trainees in the lecture hall.”

After confirming that the gas had been turned off, Director Kuo ensured the rapid evacuation of her trainees and Head Nurse Hsieh via a staircase leading down from the 7th floor. On her way down, she realized, amidst a series of aftershocks, that the interior areas of the hospital had sustained serious damage. She therefore immediately shut down the elevator. Soon after, citizens who had been injured in the earthquake started pouring into the hospital. She recalls feeling extremely thankful to Vice Superintendent Lin for assuming personal command of the Emergency



Chaotic office area on the 7th floor after the earthquake.



After a powerful earthquake strikes the Hualien-Taitung area at 2:44 pm on September 18, 2022, serious damage is reported. Consequently, Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital activates its Mass Casualty Incident Response Mechanism at 3:00 pm and launches the initial stage of staff recall.



After serious damage caused by the earthquake is reported in the southern Hualien area, Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital activates its Mass Casualty Incident Response Mechanism at 3:00 pm. Staff members successively return to the hospital to provide assistance.



Department and issuing the staff recall order. After initiation of the Mass Casualty Incident Response Mechanism, she took on dispatch duties right away and served as an on-site commander providing steady leadership for her colleagues in the completion of preparations for the large-scale influx of patients.

Recalling the scene, she remembers feeling as if in a movie set. Patients kept streaming into the Emergency

Department, which was surrounded by a cacophony of sounds of fire trucks, police cars, and ambulance sirens and even helicopter rotors... “This was not a drill but a matter of life and death! It was also one of the most pivotal missions in the 23-year history of Yuli Hospital. Over 60 staff members including colleagues on active duty and coworkers returning to the hospital after being recalled were mobilized. I am profoundly grateful to



After the earthquake, injured victims keep pouring into the hospital. Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital team members work in unison to provide medical treatment and care for all admitted patients.



Superintendent Chen Yen-Bi comforts a scared earthquake victim in a gentle voice.



Triage is conducted immediately after patients are unloaded from ambulances and admitted to the emergency department.



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colleagues for their selfless contributions to this sacred mission of protecting human lives.” She adds that “our Tzu Chi volunteers deserve special recognition! During the first days after the earthquake, we had no drinking water. We were therefore extremely thankful when Tzu Chi volunteer chefs stationed themselves in the hospital to show concern. They represent our most powerful support.”

Senior Staff Members Stand Fast at Their Posts to Provide All-out Support for Front-Line Personnel

On September 18, Ms. Chung Hua-Yun, a Registered Nurse, and Ms. Wu Pei-Yu, ICU Deputy Head Nurse, were



After the earthquake, injured victims keep pouring into the hospital. Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital team members work in unison to provide medical treatment and care for all admitted patients.

on day shift duty in the Emergency Department. Ms. Chung remembers the following scene when the earthquake struck: “The patient was about to get out of bed to sit in her wheelchair. I helped her get quickly in her chair.” As I was finished with this patient, I lifted my head and saw how a family member was trying to get to the bed when a severe earthquake hit. We yelled at him: “Stop walking and crouch down! As the ground was shaking, he kept moving while supporting himself to get into the room and visit the patient, but we told him to stop since it would have been dangerous to keep walking and we were afraid that he would fall and get hurt.”

Ms. Ni Chun-Ling, Critical Care Head Nurse at Yuli Hospital, was on day shift duty on that day and was giving an injection to a COVID-positive patient when the earthquake struck. She was kicked to the opposite bed by the patient whom she couldn’t restrain due to the earthquake. The lady in the opposite bed who was wailing in fear because of the tremor hugged her tightly. After taking care of the patients and completing handover to night shift, she immediately proceeded to the Emergency Department to assist in the handling of the patient volume and coordination of manpower while confirming conditions at the disaster sites with rescue personnel who were bringing the patients to the hospital. She also reported relevant



A mother and daughter who have been trapped in a collapsed convenience store building are rescued and rushed to Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital for emergency treatment.

information to the Health Bureau and responded to external inquiries about patient numbers and injury conditions. After receiving the recall order from the hospital, Ms. Pan Hsuan-Ching, who holds concurrent positions as Outpatient Department Head Nurse and Anesthesia RN, hopped on her scooter and rushed to the hospital from her home. After arriving at the hospital, she assisted Deputy Head Nurse Yeh Yun-Chien in reorganizing, cleaning, and sterilizing an operating room which was a complete mess in preparation for emergency surgery procedures expected at any time.

Ms. Chang Chia-Ling, Director of the Management Office, who is a resident of the Hedong Area, had to make constant



Vice Superintendent Lin Chih-Yen treats the wounds of the little girl, surnamed Tan, as Ms. Wu Pei-Yu, the Deputy Head Nurse, comforts her to calm her down.

detours on the way to the hospital since the deformed Yuli Bridge and crumbled Kaoliao Bridge, which were both located on her commute route, were closed to traffic. She had to make a big circle to Ruisui and back to the hospital. Due to the convenient location of their homes, Ms. Chen Hsiu-Chin, Director of the Administration Section, and Ms. Chen Ching-Ti and Chen Ching-Hua, two of her staff members, arrived at the hospital within ten minutes after receiving the staff recall order. Under direction of Director Kuo Ya-Ping, they rapidly set up a designated area for the injured and expanded the bed capacity. They also quickly pushed the whiteboard for the recording of incoming victims into the standby area.

After setting up the standby area in the lobby, Director Chen Hsiu-Chin embarked on a floor-by-floor inspection tour accompanied by Mr. Peng Chun-Te, Senior Duty Engineer of the Administration Section, and Mr. Hsu Tang-Ming of IT starting from the data center on the 7th floor. They also took care of the gas leakage issue in the kitchen and turned off the water supply in an emergency fashion. After that, they inspected the rooftop water tower to ensure the safety of the hospital environment. Director Chen adds that “there were three major aftershocks around 4:00 or 5:00 pm. We were providing assistance at the information



Ms. Kuo Ya-Ping (center), Director of the Nursing Division, serves as commander of the Mass Casualty Incident Response Mechanism. Dr. Yang Hsing-Liang of the Division of Family Medicine (right) returns to the outpatient department after confirming that there is sufficient manpower in the emergency department to see his patients. Upon completion of his outpatient appointments, he returns to the emergency department to provide support.



Director Kuo Ya-Ping (first left) directs care operations during the earthquake in a calm and composed manner.



After the earthquake strikes, Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital staff is mobilized for emergency treatment of incoming patients.

desk on the 1st floor when the ground started shaking and everyone, including us, rushed outside through the main entrance. When the shaking subsided, everyone returned to the hospital to complete their unfinished tasks.”

Friendly voices saying “Do you want some water? If you need any help just let me know?” could be heard everywhere in the hospital. Local Tzu Chi volunteers in the Yuli area rushed to the hospital in quick succession within thirty minutes after receiving news to assist the hospital staff in the provision of care and concern for patients and their family members and the handling of relevant matters. They also frequently reminded the busy staff members in gentle voices to drink some water and take care of their own health during breaks so they could continue their first aid and rescue services. Several volunteers cleared a driveway of debris stemming from a shattered exterior wall of the Emergency Department right after they saw it to maintain smooth access for ambulances.

Timely Assistance by Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital and Mobilization of General Affairs and Engineering

Just when it became obvious that there was an increasingly urgent need for post-disaster relief and rescue, Ms. Lin Pi-Yu, Vice President of the Tzu Chi Foundation, and Mr. Chu Chia-Hsiang, Director of the Hualien County Health Bureau successively arrived at the hospital to gain a clear understanding of the conditions at the hospital. The emergency medicine team of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital mobilized a team of 12 colleagues including Vice Superintendent Wu Pin-An, Dr. Chen Kun-Chuan, Director of the Emergency Department, Dr. Yeh Kuang-Ting, Vice Director of the Department of Orthopedics, Dr. Lu Hsiang-Ning, Director of the Department of Anesthesiology, Ms. Fan Chun-Chia, Emergency RN, and members of the Administration Unit, which reached the hospital at around 6:30 pm. The General Affairs Office assisted in the repair, maintenance, and calibration of

instruments and equipment. Numerous people participated in emergency department first aid operations and preliminary cleaning up of the scenes of devastation on each level of the hospital. In addition to providing manpower support, Mr. Her Rey-sheng, Vice President of the Tzu Chi Foundation, and Ms. Tseng Ching-Fang, Director of the Office of Humanities and Communications, Buddhist Tzu Chi Medical Foundation, quickly drove to Yuli to offer on-site assistance and report the latest information back to the Tzu Chi Disaster Prevention and Coordination Command Center in a real-time manner. They had thoughtfully brought bread and instant noodles with them to ensure their local colleagues would have access to some food to replenish their physical strength after busy periods.

Arrival of Three Seriously Injured Victims Three Hours after the Disaster

After nightfall, the siren sounds of the ambulances didn't cease. Suddenly, loud crying could be heard in the Emergency Department. It turned out that a rescued 5-year-old girl, surnamed Tan, who had been trapped in the convenience store building had just arrived at the hospital. "I want water! I want water!" She screamed sobbingly. On this muggy autumn day, she had been trapped under a pile of

rubble for three hours and her body was covered with wounds of different sizes. Luckily, she was fully conscious. After carefully examining the injuries on her arms and legs, Vice Superintendent Lin immediately initiated treatment. Deputy Head Nurse Wu Pei-Yu, who was on the other side of the bed, bent over to comfort the scared little girl and calm her down.

Roughly ten minutes later, the girl's mother, surnamed Yeh, and another survivor who had fallen off Kaoliao Bridge successively reached the hospital. The arrival of these patients resulted in



Vice Superintendent Wu Pin-An (left) and the emergency medicine team of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital arrive at Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital to provide on-site support (Superintendent Chen Yen-Bi is on the right). Tzu Chi volunteers rush to the hospital after the earthquake to be at the patients' and relatives' side and offer comfort.



The medical team of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital assists Yuli Hospital staff in the provision of emergency treatment for earthquake victims. From left to right: RN Luo Pei-Yu, Deputy Head Nurse Li Chen-Ni, and Dr. Yeh Kuang-Ting, Vice Director of the Department of Orthopedics.

another period of busy activity in the Emergency Department. Fortunately, the team dispatched by Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital had already joined their local colleagues in the provision of first aid and rescue services. The well-trained Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital staff were able to keep their calm in the face of such a large number of injured patients and discharged their duties in a well-organized and orderly manner.

Due to the chaotic situation on the day of the earthquake, the personnel on duty in the hospital only recalled the approximate times of patient arrival. It was later confirmed that the little girl and her mother were rescued from the rubble

at the disaster site at 5:42 pm and 5:56 pm, respectively. The rescue team had to carry the injured survivor from the bumpy ground at the rescue site under the bridge to the safe road surface before loading him into the ambulance that took him to the hospital. This journey was quite challenging and time-consuming and required significant manpower.

Stream of Injured Victims Ends Eight Hours After the Disaster

At 10:30 pm of that Sunday, all injured victims who had been admitted to the hospital had been properly treated. The Mass Casualty Incident

Response Mechanism could finally be deactivated. At 11:53 pm, Head Nurse Ni Chun-Ling notified all staff members of mission completion via the internal group on the messaging APP and delivered the following report: “A total of 35 victims of the Mass Casualty Incident (28 individuals with minor injuries, 3 with moderate injuries, and 4 with severe injuries) were successfully treated by Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital on September 18. 30



Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital Deputy Head Nurse Li Chen-Ni, RN Luo Pei-Yu, and NP Yu Tsung-Chia, who are on vacation in Taitung when the earthquake strikes, proceed to Guanshan Tzu Chi Hospital to provide assistance on their own initiative after they learn of the incident. After confirming that no damage or casualties have been caused in this area, they rush to Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital to offer their support.



After the earthquake, medical and administrative personnel of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital immediately set out for Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital to provide assistance in first aid and restoration tasks

of these patients have been discharged from the hospital to recuperate at home. Three patients have been transferred to Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital for follow-up treatment due to the severity of their injuries. The remaining two patients have been admitted for in-hospital treatment at Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital.”

Unceasing Love and Compassionate Health Care Expedite the Recovery and Reconstruction Process

After the strong tremor, Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital made an all-out effort

to maintain regular operations with the ultimate goal of saving lives. The dedicated ward and general acute ward continued to admit patients as usual. The operating room also resumed its operations within several hours after the incident. Only the outpatient area had to be thoroughly cleaned up and restored to its original state due to more serious damage sustained in the earthquake. The hospital therefore suspended its outpatient services on September 19 and resumed them on the next day.

The hemodialysis room which is still in the preparatory stage was flooded due to a ruptured water pipe caused by the

earthquake, which resulted in damaged and defective instruments. Due to the concerted efforts of the Construction Division of Tzu Chi Foundation and the General Affairs Office of Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital, repairs could be completed within one week. Trial operations were initiated on October 3 and the facility was officially commissioned on October 31.

The Chinese Medicine-based mobile medical services provided by Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital in the Mingli Community of Fuli Township faced the conundrum of a traffic disruption caused by the broken bridge. After a brainstorming session, the team planned a new route. Despite the longer distance, the team still insists on providing consultation services for local citizens as promised.

The plight of numerous earthquake victims in Yuli, Hualien County, and Chishang, Taitung County, whose homes had been seriously damaged in the earthquake and were without water for several days, dwarfed the damage caused to the kitchen and office area on the 7th floor of the hospital. During the post-disaster restoration and reconstruction period, the Dharma Master of the Tzuchi Jing Si Abode therefore made a special trip to Yuli and Taitung to provide spiritual care for local residents. Tzu Chi volunteer chefs from different communities in Hualien County worked in shifts to prepare free Bento boxes for earthquake victims and

hospital personnel. Ms. Yeh Yu-Ting, who is employed as a nutritionist at Yuli Hospital, delivered steaming hot Bento box meals from Jing Si Hall in Yuli to all units of the hospital. These tasty and healthy vegetarian meals were infused with love and compassion.

With a view to providing assistance to Yuli residents in the repair and reconstruction of their damaged homes, Tzu Chi volunteers with professional backgrounds in plumbing and electricity, civil engineering, and masonry successively proceeded to Yuli to take temporary residence and assist local citizens in assessing the damage and carrying out repairs. Yuli Hospital offered additional Chinese Medicine-based nighttime outpatient services that fell within the responsibility of Dr. Huang Ming-Wen and Dr. Wang Jen-Fu to relieve muscle soreness experienced by these volunteers at the end of a hard day of repair work. In view of the high day-night temperature difference characteristic of the fall-winter transition, Ms. Kuo Ya-Ping, Director of the Nursing Division, also provided medical and health consultation services including blood pressure measurements for community volunteers and craft volunteers to safeguard the physical health of all Tzu Chi volunteers.

On October 11, Dharma Master Cheng Yen visited Yuli Township to offer comfort to local residents and express



Tzu Chi Foundation Vice President Her Rey-sheng and Tzu Chi Medical Foundation Communication with Humanity Office Director Tseng Ching-Fang bring bread and instant noodles with them to ensure their local colleagues have access to food to replenish their physical strength after busy periods.

her deep gratitude to Tzu Chi volunteers engaged in post-disaster repair and reconstruction work in southern Hualien and to the venerable physicians and nurses of Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital for their tireless efforts to treat injuries and cure diseases at the height of the earthquake crisis. They successfully accomplished their mission of “saving lives, protecting health, and upholding the spirit of love and compassion” in collaboration with the administrative staff of the hospital who displayed a spirit of unity, harmony, and mutual assistance.

Looking back, this unprecedented grand lesson of the most severe earthquake in Yuli in the last seven decades not only made everyone realize

the unpredictability of disasters but also underscored the importance of access to emergency care and relief in remote townships. Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital fulfilled its duties in the field of health care, first aid, and rescue services in a dedicated and sincere manner in the direct aftermath of the disaster and during the post-disaster restoration and reconstruction period. In the future, the hospital will continue to stand fast at its post in the Provincial Highway 9 area in southern Hualien to safeguard the health and safety of local citizens in eastern Taiwan through the provision of heartwarming health care and humanistic concern.