

Green Hospital, Joining Hands for the Future of our Planet

By Lai Ning-Sheng Superintendent of Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital

Climate change is the biggest health threat facing humanity in the 21st century. This threat encompasses death from extreme heat, infectious diseases, and famine. As members of a medical institution with high carbon emissions and high energy consumption, we are not only firmly committed to caring for our patients' health but also to the promotion of green hospital concepts in the medical field with a view to minimizing environmental damage.

Since the establishment of Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital, we have been steadfastly committed to the adoption of green building concepts and implementation of power and water conservation and resource recycling to make dedicated contributions to temperature reduction, energy conservation, mitigation of environmental impacts, and protection of our planet through carbon savings. As of the end of 2005, we make an all-out effort to implement the Health-promoting Hospital (HPH) concept which is centered around the four dimensions of environment, staff, patients, and communities in a systematic manner. Our efforts in this area have been recognized with countless awards.



In addition to the installation of hard- and software facilities, we have adopted policies to support staff members in their attempts to incorporate green living concepts into their daily lives. Staircases in the hospital area have been beautified and converted into “health trails” to encourage staff members and visitors to take the stairs instead of the elevator. We also urge our staff members to turn off lights when not in use and implement water conservation by reducing the faucet water stream to the diameter of a chopstick.

Vegetarian meals are available in all hospital areas and our cafeterias refrain from the use of disposable tableware. In the context of our recent “Dalin Tzu Chi Green Forest” activities, we have encouraged our staff members to join the LINE@ life sphere group titled “2023 Dalin Tzu Chi Green Forest” and thereby motivate them to implement energy conservation and carbon reduction in their daily lives. Relevant measures and actions include turning off lights and computers when not in use, water conservation, non-use of disposable tableware, and selection of Green Mark-certified products. We remind our staff members to keep weekly records of actual achievements in this area. We further encourage them to practice green living and thereby help mitigate climate change through concrete action.

We share our experiences and engage in interactions and exchanges all over the world. In addition to participating in worldwide international conferences and organizing topic-based workshops and academic lectures, we have forged ties with numerous international NGOs that prioritize eco-friendly hospital operations such as Health Care Without Harm, Global Green and Healthy Hospital, and Sustainability Health and Education Foundation. Furthermore, we have signed cooperation memoranda with Khoo Teck Puat Hospital in Singapore, Health Care Foundation Nepal, Buddhist Tzu Chi Merits

Society Malaysia, and Griffith University. Ongoing international exchanges and cooperation centered around the three dimensions of education, research, and practice in the fields of climate change, disaster adaptation, eco-friendliness, and health promotion serve the purpose of taking the promotion of green healthcare to the next level. Over a period of many years, Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital has achieved brilliant results in successive green hospital-related international competitions.

The rising severity of flooding and droughts caused by climate change poses a major threat for human survival. This phenomenon also represents a pressing health issue. We therefore place simultaneous emphasis on care for our patients and the health of our planet. Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital is the first hospital in Asia to participate in the “2050 Race to Zero” campaign. We persist in our efforts in the fields of carbon emission inventories and implementation of improvements and corrective action to reach our goal of net zero emissions. In addition to the acquisition of ISO 50001 and ISO 14064 certificates, we have adopted international standards to gain the ability to detect and minimize potential environmental impacts present in our daily healthcare operations. Our ultimate goal is to become a benchmark hospital in Taiwan, assume a leadership role in the Taiwanese healthcare industry, and realize the key objective of net zero emissions prior to 2050.