



Small Town, Happy Town

Health Promotion in Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital

by Shih-Yuan Chen

Even though the Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital has less than 100 staff and only 46 patient beds, the hospital started promoting health in 2009. In 2010, the hospital received its international internet membership for Health Promoting Hospitals. Dr. Yuh-Lin Chang, superintendent of the hospital, led colleagues to actively promote related activities within the hospital and in the community. Finally, we were able to highlight our achievement at the 20th International Conference of Health Promotion Hospitals, winning one poster award and three oral presentations. Suddenly, the rural town's hospital became a learning model for over 2000 hospitals around the world.



Promoting age-friendly activities – Shih-Yuan Chen shares how Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital promotes health for the elderly in conjunction with the community.

Senior Friendly Service & Healthy Employees

This time, Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital had four papers accepted for presentation. One of these was a poster titled “A Humane Method: Painless Suture for Open Wound of Children”. Three oral presentations were: “Reduction of Carbon Emission in Medical Service”, “Never Too Late to Exercise” and “A Simple Strategy to Improve Employees’ Health”. The first two were 10 minutes each, the result of Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital’s effort to improve the health of the community’s elderly. The first was about driving to give vaccinations to the elderly, thus saving their money and reduce carbon emission

by driving back and forth the hospital. This was reported by management unit Director Chang-Tse Tang. The second was about a plan to encourage the seniors to exercise routinely to strengthen their joints. This was reported by Shih-Yuan Chen, the assistant director. The third was introduced by Ko-Jen Lin, the group leader, about the results of the hospital’s drive for employee exercise.

Superintendent Chang encouraged everyone by saying, “This is a very rare opportunity. Only after one year, we already have the opportunity to present four papers on stage. I appreciate every colleague’s effort in promoting health. Having the chance to go on stage to report our work is the best way to learn how to be independent.



The meeting’s emcee, Taiwan Hospital Affairs Management Association Director General, Yaw-Tang Shih (left), praised Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital’s effort in promoting staff exercises. The right one is Vice Superintendent Yen-Pi Chen.

Overcoming the Language Barrier

Originally, Superintendent Chang wanted to participate in the meeting, but at the last minute he had to remain on duty in the hospital's emergency room. In order to prepare his staff to deliver the presentations in English, Dr. Chang invited medical treatment division's director, Dr. Yen-Pi Chen, to accompany the staff to the meeting to provide onsite guidance.

To use English as the presentation language is a daunting challenge for the hospital staff from the rural town of Yuli. The challenge made them very nervous especially when they knew they were facing top scholars from all over the world. However, as long as they were prepared, their hard work would be known to the world. After the presentations were finished, our coworkers received praises from the audience. Even the representatives from Hong Kong and Singapore hospitals took the initiative to come forward to exchange business cards.

Director Tang recalls that up until two days before the meeting, he still could not decide whether he should give

the opportunity to other people. After all, this was the first time in his life he gave an English presentation. Before the conference, CEO Lin, and his wife Mrs. Lin and many others encouraged him, but on stage there was still an enormous pressure. One of the staff who also presented was Supervisor Ko-Jen Lin. She originally had stage fright, but as soon as she was on stage she felt like it a dream. She recalled, "On the day of the speech, my heart was pounding heavily. I encourage myself that I am ready since I have already practiced so many times. As I read the script, I forgot that I was on stage. It was just like another practice. I only wanted to read my script well, so the audience disappeared in front of me."

During this conference, we had the opportunity to introduce the Health Promotion experience of a remote region to the international symposium. Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital also had the opportunity to expand its horizon, to bring back international Health Promotion's latest concepts and practice to the Taiwan's East Rift Valley. Through Yuli Tzu Chi Hospital's effort, people in the small town can also enjoy health care at the international level.