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Preface

To Share with IAGG Colleagues, Worldwide-Integrated Care for the Elderly in Taiwan

The elderly aged 65 years and over in Taiwan has reached 14.0% since 2018, making Taiwan an aged society. It is estimated that Taiwan will become a “super aged society” in 2026. Integrated care becomes essential to meet with needs and demands of both health care and welfare services for the elderly.¹

Integrated care presents a comprehensive model to care an individual patient as a whole. By effectively harmonizing the care of all providers—such as primary care physicians, specialists, social workers, nutritionists and physical therapists in primary care settings, hospitals, long-term care facilities or in a community, they together work with aged clients to develop customized holistic plans that incorporate the physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of the person, his/her response to illness, and the effects of the illness on the ability to meet patient’s self-care needs.

To nurture the knowledge, attitude and ability for holistic care providers, education and training should start from early years of undergraduate education by means of problem-based learning (PBL) and basic-clinical integrated modules. During clinical years in internship and postgraduate training, a more advanced curriculum via adopting evidence-based medicine (EBM), narrative medicine, role modeling, case-presentation including case-based learning (CBL), inter-professional learning (IPL) and other forms of blended learning in clinical setting should be implemented.² A high quality of clinical practice will certainly facilitate holistic care for busy care providers. This requires establishment of an efficient universal informatics system coupled with an effective management for health services provided by the National Health Insurance Administration, as well as a general medicine training covering geriatric care in 2-year post-graduate year (PGY) program for all medical graduates since 2019 in Taiwan.³

To integrate our health care system and welfare services, Taiwan’s Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW) was established in July, 2013. The goal was to seamlessly combine medical care, living services, and nursing care together to better meet the needs and demands of older people and their families. In addition, eight service items in the National 10-year Long-term Care Plan were increased to 17 service items in The Long-term Care Plan 2.0 version in 2016. The

integration of health care and welfare project has been funded by the Ministry of Health and Welfare since 2016 which is composed of three sub-projects: the integration of health and welfare services including Programs of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE), the integration of health care and welfare information system, and the integration of hospital and community health services through the Family Physician Integrated Care Project started since 2003 and a national mutual referral system since 2017.^{4,5}

References

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Meng-Chih Lee (mcl@csmu.edu.tw)
Department of Family Medicine, Taichung Hospital,
Ministry of Health and Welfare, Taichung, Taiwan

Institute of Population Health Sciences,
National Health Research Institutes, Miaoli, Taiwan

College of Management, Chaoyang University of Technology,
Taichung

Institute of Medicine, Chung Shan Medical University,
Taichung, Taiwan

School of Public Health, National Defense Medical College,
Taipei, Taiwan