



ER Nurses with Energy and Passion

By: Yang Giou-Teng, Director of ER, Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital

The clock passed 1 A.M. in the morning. Nurse Chang Ning-Jun, “Brother Giou, a patient who has (District D Bed 23) had a fever and pneumonia is being monitored for his condition. His symptoms include asthma, breathing with phlegm and lip cyanosis. I raised up his oxygen intake level but the sputum suction procedure failed.”

Me, nicknamed Brother Giou, responded: “Patient has signs of respiratory distress, let’s put him on an oxygen mask and move him to the emergency room. Please call for help on the way.”

Immediately, nurse Chia-Ying from district B, and nurse Pei-Hsin from district C rushed to assist and escort the patient to the emergency room. Inside the emergency room, nurse Yuan-Ting and specialist Hsiao-Jun were setting up monitoring equipment for the emergency procedure. By listening to the patient’s wheezing, they quickly administered some nebulized bronchodilator medications, and applied intravenous medications to lower the risk of his already low blood pressure. Patient respiration was failing because of pneumonia and a life-threatening septic shock might follow. Finally, Endotracheal Intubation was applied with the ventilator to stabilize the breathing; then the patient was transferred to ICU for monitoring.



Nursing is a very complicated task with many details, and often requires coping with a variety of situations, including taking body temperature, blood pressure, breathing, heart rate and other vital signs. Other tasks include the observation when the patients' condition changes, administrating treatment, wound dressing and health education. It also includes feeding and bathing, cleaning urine and feces, and even after discharge for rehabilitation, home visits and other follow-up care. However, in the emergency room, we are often faced with conditions that require fast-paced, quick-mind, sharp reactions, but also extraordinary perseverance and patience.

Nurses Ning-Jun, Chia-Ying and Pei-Hsin all reported to work in August of last year about the same time. They were assigned to the emergency room (ER) department. A registered nurse requires, passing the school exams and the national nurse license exam, completion of a residency period, actual ER experience; and most importantly a warm-heart full of enthusiasm and the willingness to serve. Over the past year, they became an essential part of the emergency room.



Ning-Jun has her childhood in Pingtung living with loving care. “The people back home are caring and willing to share. It cultivates my optimistic personality and love to help others,” said Ning-Jun.

She left her hometown and went northern Taiwan to study in Nursing College. Dormitory life, group practice and group reports prepared her to adapt to school life and build interpersonal relationships. Hospital internship experiences open her eyes to witness hundreds of different lives which cultivate empathy and compassion, but also the meaning of altruism – “Your pain is my pain, your suffering is my sorrow.” After graduation, she joined the emergency room team.

Ning-Jun said, “At first it was just because I wanted to learn more and be able to make my own decision when facing the emergency situations. Several classmates chose emergency care together. In addition to understanding theories, we have a passion and lot of curiosity. Learning is never ending, and nursing care is especially true, as long as you are willing to learn and willing to try. Luckily, we met many good friends and colleagues along the way. We learn from each other, share and encourage each other to meet the challenge. After work, we take care of each other and go out together to relax and unwind. We grow like a family and work like soldiers trusting each other. That makes life beautiful every single day.”

It is like what Chia-Ying said, “You can live a day happily or unhappy. Why not choose to live happily every day.”

The current Taiwan medical environment is deteriorating, a problem not only all the health care workers, but also for all present and future residents of Taiwan have to deal with altogether. Improvement is needed in the medical insurance system, payment processing and policy administration; we also need the public to cooperate more in the area of mutual tolerance, respect and encouragement. Ning-Jun said, “Of course, ER patients and their families come to hospital with medical issues, so sometimes their tone, attitude, and action may not be considerate to nurses. However, if we treat them like our friends and families, and are a little more patience, then maybe we can do what Dharma Master Cheng Yen said, “Unconditional giving is serving without complaining, and giving without asking for anything in return.”

I am very happy and lucky to be in the Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital emergency room. There is a group of energetic and warm-hearted angels. They are our best partners to take care of the patients in the ER.