



Nursing with Humanity

Chin-Lon Lin, CEO of Tzu Chi Medical Mission

The global nursing shortage has been a crucial issue. Taiwan is facing the same situation. Among the six Tzu Chi hospitals, except Taipei and Taichung hospitals which are located in the metropolitan areas, Dalin hospital on the west coast, and Hualien, Yuli and Kuanshan hospitals on the east coast are all suburban hospitals experiencing shortage of nurses. Although recruitment is all year round, most nursing graduates choose to work close to home or in the metropolitan area. The three rural hospitals on the east coast lack the competitive advantage because of their geographical location.

During the busy June graduation month, the six hospitals' nursing departments have already started the recruiting process. Colleagues at Tzu Chi University and Tzu Chi College of Technology are scheduling on-campus recruitment at other nursing schools throughout Taiwan. They plan to visit their own alma-mater schools to encourage juniors with passion in nursing to join them. Since Hualien hospital is both a medical and education center, nurses are encouraged to do research and work towards educational breakthrough in addition to their regular nursing duties. Hence, though arduous workload is imaginable, only those that are part of it can experience the satisfaction and achievement.

At the beginning of this year, Hualien Tzu Chi hospital held a series of nursing training programs for students from southern Taiwan to be acquainted with Hualien, Yuli and Kuanshan Tzu Chi hospitals. We hope the surrounding natural beauty can attract new blood for the hospitals. Students' response of the events was positive, but the recruiting effect was limited. The problem is again due to the remote location.

Under these circumstances, I am grateful to all the staffs that have devoted themselves to nursing for the past 25 years. I am thankful for their steadfastness and persistence all these years. People such as Chih-Hui Lin who has worked at the supply center since Hualien hospital's inauguration; Director Secretary of CEO office Shun-Hua Wen who used to work as an operation room chief nurse at the National Taiwan University Hospital, Director Shu-Chuan Chang, Vice Director Hui-Ling Lai and many more. Because of these people, Tzu Chi nursing specialty and spirit have spread from Hualien to Yuli, Kuanshan, Dalin, Taipei and Taichung. Many nursing staff are actually trained in Hualien but re-assigned to other branches. Many of them have taken on supervision duties or become the main force of the nursing teams. Tzu Chi's medical group has gone through its medicine mission for a quarter century. During which time not only medical but also nursing tradition has been inherited, passed on, and blossomed among the six hospitals. Tzu Chi's nursing humanistic culture is established through time. The stories I heard and the things I experienced have witnessed this humanity. It makes me proud and grateful.

For instance, brother Futien from Budai Township in Chiayi often volunteers at Dalin branch and goes to see doctors regularly. The head nurse and other colleagues knew that he lives alone and was financially unstable, so they took turns to give him rides to the train station. When brother Futien was hospitalized, he did not have clothes with him. Nurse Jiaqui told him that she would take care of it and assured him to stay at the hospital. When Jiaqui went home, she told her mom who quickly collected some clothing for him. During Futien's hospitalization, Jiaqui spent time to chat with him. Later on, Futien reunited with his old supervisor from the army who happened to be Jiaqui's grandfather. This had reconnected the two who had not seen each other for 40 years. They both felt the coincidence was unbelievable. Futien used to see me at the cardiovascular department, later on he spent his time mainly at the pulmonary division. It is a pity that he was overcome by disease and left us. However, half a year before his passing, he especially appreciated the time Jiaqui and her mother spent with him, which provided a happy memory in his life.

Nurses made good use of their personal time to care for patients. Isn't this a manifestation of nursing humanity from our staff?

Another instance is a senior nurse who took initiative to let junior nurses practice needle injection on her. This is to avoid patients suffering from trial and error. It is rare that a person is willing to endure pain for another's practice. Even some medical staffs are afraid of taking shots. It is cases like these throughout our hospitals that we see Tzu Chi's spirit of humanity.

Just as the words I have mentioned in my book, "Management by Means of Love", published in the 25th anniversary of Tzu Chi Medical Mission, 2011. I always use this to remind our staff, "A teacher is to instill morality, instruct knowledge, resolve confusion, and be a role model." Whether you are a doctor or nurse, you share your professional experiences accumulated through the time, to help new comers to solve problems, and most importantly become a role model. This is my expectation to you all.

Giving is more privileged than receiving, Dr. Chin-Lon Lin, CEO of Tzu Chi Medical Mission, encourages more people to join nursing profession.

I also welcome all the friends who have ambition in nursing to join us. We should understand, cherish and appreciate our blessings so we can create more. Giving is more privileged than receiving. I wish you all can grow and learn happily, and wish your family be well and happy.

