TAIWAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Ming-Been LEE*1

Installment of Taiwan Medical Association’s New President and Executives
Taiwan Medical Association held the presidential election at the first Representative Congress of the 8th term in May of 2007. Dr. Ming-Been Lee won majority votes from the representatives and councils and was installed as the new president of Taiwan Medical Association. In order to undertake our responsibilities as a member of the global society, Dr. Lee stresses his desire to strengthen the communication with other medical associations and to share Taiwan’s medical system and experience through frequent interactions.

Taiwan Medical Association Was Awarded the 2006 Excellent National Professional Organization by Ministry of the Interior
In order to strengthen the function and structure, and enhance the development of professional organizations, Ministry of the Interior in Taiwan hosted an “Excellent National Professional Organization” performance screening. Taiwan Medical Association stood out from among 7,800 organizations and was awarded by the Minister of the Interior for the following reasons: Aggressively participate in cooperative plan hosted by the Department of Health and WMA activities; undertake physician clinics global budget task; build global informational network; assist in physicians’ national insurance enrollment, payment and brochures’ edition; establish medical dedication award to cite for physicians’ exceptional distribution to the health care industry; assist DOH in drawing up “Patient Safety Guidelines” as a reference to patients and families.

Striving for Medical Reconstruction Fund
The increase of aging population, numbers qualify for serious injury and the introduction of new medical technologies have all contribute to the annual 8–10% medical expenditure growth rate. The financial difficulty is extremely urgent. However, the Bureau of National Health Insurance has strengthened its control over health care facilities. The model it uses to control the payment system contradicts with market mechanism and has led to a twisted and restrained future for the health care development.

In 2005, the health care expenditure counted for 6.16% of GDP in Taiwan. This is significantly low compare to 8% in OECD countries and 15.3% in the U.S.A. There is no doubt that Taiwan is offering high quality health care services with insufficient resource. Nevertheless, health care facilities face a discounted payment system. This will danger the health care system if it induces the health care facilities to collapse and the providers to break down.

In order to maintain the health service quality, improve peoples’ habit of accessing health care services and health care system default, hold the public health system together, assure patients’ right to access health care services, we have been striving for the government to budgeting the “medical reconstruction fund” for 2 years. The main purpose is to add the budget to the unbalanced global budget payment system. The premier has finally agreed our appeal for 50 billion dollars “medical reconstruction fund” budget in September of 2007.

Insurance Certification—IC card
Taiwan introduced National Health Insurance in 1995. With the need of informationize, insurance

*1 President, Taiwan Medical Association, Taipei, ROC (intl@tma.tw).
certification evolved from paper into IC card in 2004 and the first stage registration and uploading was implemented at the same time. In order to increase the accuracy of medical information, reduce the consumption of medical resources, monitor health care facilities that patients access and assist in the implementation of various prevention measures, the Bureau of National Health Insurance in Taiwan adopted a disciplinary and rewarding method to request health care facilities to cooperate with second stage registration and uploading in 2007. The main contents include primary and secondary diagnosis, medication, physician orders, fees...etc. However, Taiwan Medical Association continues to negotiate with Department of Health and the Bureau of National Health Insurance not to force the implementation by using disciplinary way due to the suspicion from different facets such as: facilities’ settlement, ability to handle information and the doubt of service quality, ethics, privacy, legal and practical operation. We are still continuing our talks with other parties in order to reduce the impact this has caused to health care facilities.

Taiwan Medical Association Signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Argentina Medical Association

Taiwan Medical Association signed a bilateral Avian Flu cooperative memorandum of Understanding with Dr. Jorge Carlos Janez, President of the Argentina Medical Association, in April of 2007 based on the standpoint of “diseases without borders.” The main purpose is to bring NGO’s participation in international epidemic prevention into play through both organizations’ interaction and cooperation with the hope to assist people and government from both countries to completely prevent avian flu from happening again.

Taiwan Medical Association’s Representative Made a Keynote Speech in 2007 World Medical Assembly

Dr. Heng-Shuen Chen from the Taiwan Medical Association was invited to be the speaker of 2007 World Medical Assembly Scientific Session on the topic “e-Health Solutions for Systems in Development.” Dr. Chen gave a detail introduction on Taiwan’s medical technology, such as IC card, telemedicine, the development and research in telemedicine in recent years, and how to combine other information systems to promote health care quality...etc.
2006 Excellent National Professional Organization

- Aggressively participate in cooperative plans with the Department of Health of Taiwan and WMA.
- Undertake physician clinics global budget task.
- Establish "Medical Dedication Award" to cite for physicians’ exceptional contributions to the health care.
- Assist DOH to draw up the "Patient Safety Guidelines" as a reference to patients and families.

Medical Reconstruction Fund

- Every year, a 8~10% growth of medical expenditure due to population aging, advanced medical technology development and many other factors was noted in Taiwan
- In 2005, health care expenditure around the world
  - Taiwan: 6.16% of GDP
  - OECD countries: 8% of GDP
  - USA: 15.3% of GDP
- The discounted payment system had great impacts to the health care system
- 50 billions NT dollars (1.3 billions USD) of "medical reconstruction fund" has been proposed

Insurance Certification - IC Card

- National Health Insurance in 1995
- First stage in 2004
  - Patient visit data registration and uploading was implemented by IC cards
- Second stage in 2007
  - Patient visit registration and uploading of all claim data, including primary and secondary diagnosis, medications, physician orders, fees ...etc

Memorandum with the Argentina Medical Association

- Diseases have no borders
  - In April of 2007, TMA signed a bilateral Avian Flu cooperative memorandum with the Argentina Medical Association
  - Invite both GO and NGO to participate in this cooperative prevention program

Keynote Speech in 2007 World Medical Assembly

- Dr. Heng-Shuen Chen from the Taiwan Medical Association was invited speak in the 2007 World Medical Assembly Scientific Session
  - "e-Health Solutions for Systems in Development."

Mental health gatekeeper program

- All 13,000 primary care physicians were invited to be gatekeepers of suicide prevention
- Mental health collaborative care systems for primary care physicians and mental health workers
  - Depression management
  - Dementia screening