

Creating a New Era of Taiwanese Psychiatry Together

Thankfulness and Responsibility

I am thankful for the support from the members and board of directors of the Taiwanese Society of Psychiatry (TSOP). It is my honor to be the 32nd president of the TSOP. As a practitioner in psychiatric clinics for improved the past nine years, my position reflects the consistency of my 25-year career as a psychiatrist, acts as a bridge between different systems internationally, and promotes collaboration between clinical, educational, research, government, and community mental health institutions.

According to the report from the Taiwanese Medical Association (www.tma.tw/stats/index_AllPDF.asp), the number of psychiatrists in Taiwan has rapidly increased from 1,292 in 2008 to 1,837 in 2022, which is a 42% increase in 15 years. This situation is in accordance with the rapidly increasing demands for mental health, especially twice the increase of common mental disorders [1]. To meet the needs of patients with common mental disorders, the number of general psychiatrists practicing in clinics has increased more than three-fold from 159 in 2008 to 553 in 2022 (www.tma.tw/stats/index_AllPDF.asp). Furthermore, the fields of psychiatric practice have been diversified and deepened. These fields include addiction medicine, forensic psychiatry, geriatric psychiatry, as well as child and adolescent psychiatry. We are developing various biological and psychological therapies in different psychiatric services for our patients. It is our goal to elevate professional and ethical standards to provide the best psychiatric care for patients and to facilitate the acceptance of patients by families and society. We also make great effort to have good alliance with other interdisciplinary professionals in Taiwan and psychiatric associations across the world. The most important thing of all is to engage in dialogues with officers in the government and to strive for necessary psychiatric resources in Taiwan.

Safeguarding Profession

The commitment of the TSOP to safeguard the professional discipline should start with education and training. We aim at optimizing the training for resident doctors in psychiatry and the continuous education for psychiatrists through the committees of selection, education, academic programs, and editorial. Subspecialty committees and professional subcommittees must devote to fostering the development of various professional fields, and the ethics committee can ensure professional self-discipline. In addition, the TSOP also establishes academic alliance with cross-disciplinary professional groups. *Taiwanese Journal of Psychiatry*, the official academic publication of the TSOP, is the cornerstone to establish academic communication internationally. The Public Affairs Subcommittee aims at establishing a seamless and

efficient bridge of dialogue in Taiwan. Through the facilitation of the International Affairs Committee, we seek to promote constructive discussions with international professional organizations in clinical practice, academia, and the mental health system.

Proclaimed Resources and Rights Maintenance

Building on the foundation of professional safeguarding, the TSOP will actively protect the resources and rights of its members. To maintain reasonable resources of psychiatry services, it is important to communicate and negotiate with the National Health Insurance Administration, Regional Medical Association, and Taiwan Medical Association. Furthermore, relevant psychiatric resources should be proclaimed from other public sectors such as the Department of Mental Health, Health Promotion Association, and National Science Council in Taiwan. Based on the evaluation of psychiatric service, the TSOP can provide evidence to secure public resources beyond the coverage of national health insurance. In addition, the TSOP should improve psychiatrists' working environment by reforming labor policies with other physician groups.

Teamwork and Succession

As the elected two-year term president of the TSOP, I extend my gratitude to the senior members who provided precious suggestions about the continuous development of the TSOP. These suggestions include the resources and functions of the secretariat, reserve of the professional pools, and participation in setting national policies. I am thankful to Hsi-Chung Chen for taking the important rôle of secretary-general of the TSOP. He leads the senior secretaries and 12 deputy secretary-generals from various organizations and specialties to execute the decisions of the directors of the board. Directors of each committee and subcommittee are the strongest intellectual assets in the TSOP. Close cooperation with the Department of Mental Health, which is led by Liang-Yu Chen will be continuously pursued. From the vision of public health, the TSOP must emphasize the importance of early recognition and treatment of psychiatric illness. The TSOP should deliver related knowledge to members, enhance the awareness of psychiatric illness in public, and decrease the stigma of psychiatric illness in Taiwan. These preventive fields include mental problems in children and adolescents, early psychosis, substance abuse, depression, and dementia in the elderly. Considering amendments to the Mental Health Act and reform of National Health Insurance, the TSOP will plan to establish research teams to provide relevant opinions to public sectors. Finally, I express my gratitude to all directors and members of the Association of Taiwanese Psychiatric Clinic (ATPC),

who have worked closely with me in these years. I believe that the ATPC can work as the best frontline partner with the TSOP. I believe that all the directors from various systems will cooperate with each other, serve for all members, and pass on the responsibilities to the future generation. Let us create a new era of Taiwanese psychiatry together, i.e., to create together, endure together, and share glory together.

Data Availability Statement

Data sharing is not available to this editorial because no datasets were generated or analyzed during the writing of this editorial.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no potential conflicts of interest in writing this editorial.

Reference

1. Fu TS, Lee CS, Gunnell D, et al.: Changing trends in the prevalence of common mental disorders in Taiwan: a 20-year repeated cross-sectional survey. *Lancet* 2013; 381: 235-41.

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