

# **The Development of Taiwan's Healthy Cities**

## **1. The Establishment and Promotion of Healthy Cities throughout Taiwan**

Due to differences between the various living areas in Taiwan, the promotional methodologies differ and fall under two categories: large cities and towns/villages. Beginning with large cities, the program develops major goals, plans, and indicators. From there, differences between the inner towns of huge cities such as Taipei City, New Taipei City, and Pingtung are taken into account along with the variation in these areas' administrations. Basic practical measures for these smaller towns are first developed, followed by gradual promotional expansions.

### **Functions**

To understand the progress of healthy cities, one must first apply the City Health Profile. The two primary parts of the city health profile are basic data and healthy city indicators. The establishment of healthy city indicators is most important, as they allow one to understand the past and present states of the healthy city program. In this way, one can set appropriate goals that will allow the healthy city to gradually move forward.

The system of healthy city indicators is dynamic, which makes its establishment and monitoring even more important. Indicator data can improve estimations, allow for diagnoses of overall problems, and shed light on developing trends, thereby allowing the program to move forward in the appropriate advancement of policy setting and problem solving.

### **Methodology of Establishment**

The major indicators for Taiwan's healthy city program come from the 32 indicators of WHO's international healthy city program. The individual healthy city programs within Taiwan may then discuss and decide on additional indicators. At the outset, these indicators will be

developed through dialogue among team members, citizens, and program officials. From there, indicator names, definitions, and data collection can move forward.

## **2. National Indicators in the Healthy City Program**

Taiwan's national indicators in the healthy city program fall into two groups:

i. Huge cities and town centers: 14 health indicators (9 of which are international indicators), 7 environmental indicators (5 of which are international indicators), 13 social indicators (4 of which are international indicators), making a total of 34 indicators (18 of which are international indicators).

ii. Areas under county governance: 16 health indicators (10 of which are international indicators), 17 environmental indicators (12 of which are international indicators), 15 social indicators (4 of which are international indicators), making a total of 48 indicators (26 of which are international indicators).

## **The Taiwan Healthy City Alliance**

### **1. Establishment Procedure**

Taiwan has witnessed an increase in the number of cities joining the healthy city program. To take advantage of this situation and combine information from participating cities would be beneficial for Taiwan's healthy city program as a whole. Accordingly, Tainan, Taipei, and Kaohsiung created the Taiwan Healthy City Alliance in late 2005.

On February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2006, the existing head of the Bureau of Public Health, Sheng-Mao Hou; Tainan's Major, Tian-Cai Xu; Taipei's Mayor, Ying-Jiu Ma (currently president); and Kaosiung's Major, Ju-Lan Ye invited public officials from around the country to participate in the "Summit for the Taiwan Healthy City Alliance." (This summit was Taiwan's first conference on the groundwork for a healthy city alliance.) Approximately 70 persons attended the meeting, including senior and junior public officials as well as representatives from 23 cities. During this meeting, attendees drafted and signed the "Protocol for Healthy Cities," which specified a requirement for at least

one meeting a year, starting with informal discussion and later leading to a decision on the details of a yearly workshop, which would alternate throughout member-cities of the Taiwan Healthy City Alliance.

## **2. Mission**

The Taiwan Healthy City Alliance was officially established on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008. The alliance has developed a wide-reaching partnership with the purpose of connecting governmental departments, local administration, experts, citizen groups, social organizations, and local residents. This has allowed for an easy method of information sharing, which allows for the development of cities that can meet the needs of residents. Our missions include:

- i. Assist local governments in evaluating city health problems.
- ii. Centralize local data that can assist in the development of healthy cities, aging-friendly city, and communities.
- iii. Hold conferences and educational training programs that can improve the country's ability to advance healthy city and aging-friendly city programs.
- iv. Create a platform on which individuals cities can share their healthy city and aging-friendly city program experiences.
- v. Centralize data on the results of every healthy city and aging-friendly city program in Taiwan and share the data with the international healthy city organization.
- vi. Assist individual healthy city and aging-friendly city programs in connecting with the international healthy city program.
- vii. Contribute to other healthy city missions.

## **3. Introducing the Logo of the Alliance**

To bring an objective and external impression of this program to our country's citizens, the Taiwan Health City Alliance constructed a representative logo on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2011. The logo was developed under the context of the program's goals, incorporating the overall notion of the healthy city program in its design, which the following describes:

The figure of a vigorous human form represents vitality and

stands for the healthy citizens of our country. The figure's hand meets green leaves, showing the importance of humankind's connection with nature. Just as nature eternally renews itself, the establishment of a healthy city eternally moves forward. The "H" orbiting around Taiwan carries with it the connotation of a circle of influence among the healthy cities of Taiwan, an influence in which the sharing of information and experiences allow Taiwan to move forward into a new era of health.

The colors were also designed with representation in mind. Green represents both healthy and environmental conservation; blue represents cleanliness; orange represents peace and safety; magenta represents beauty. Together, the four colors stand for a healthy, environmentally-friendly, clean, peaceful, safe, and beautiful "healthy city".

#### **4. Organization and Work Distribution**

To improve the operation and development of the Taiwan Healthy City Alliance, three committees were formed, each with different missions.

- i. Research and development: data collection, monitoring, and analysis
- ii. Events and training: training and educational development; communication with the international community
- iii. Rewards and evaluations: evaluations of healthy city programs

#### **5. Introduction of Rewards and Evaluation Activities**

The inclusion of numerous organizations and groups stems from a motivation to encourage all areas of Taiwan in collaborating and sharing information. Included in this program are local governments, expert consultants, social groups, community organizations, and individual citizens. Through this program's actions, the Taiwan Healthy City Alliance can improve its ability to create high-quality healthy cities and senior citizen-friendly cities. To encourage the positive results these programs bring, the alliance has created the

“Award for Healthy Cities and Senior Citizen-Friendly Cities.” Besides helping with the extension and application of our plan, this reward will inspire intercity sharing of results.

As Taiwan falls deeper into its status as an aging society, the promotion of the “Senior-citizen Friendly City” will be beneficial. The alliance in addition to offering 8 awards for healthy cities, is offering 8 awards for senior-city friendly cities, bringing the total number of categories for reward applications to 16. The sixteen application categories follow.

#### **A. Healthy Cities**

**1. Health policy award: health promotion policies:**

Governmental organizations investigate and implement public policies, including both top-down and bottom-up approaches, encouraging citizen organizations to participate, and establishing public policy beneficial to the community.

**2. Healthy environment award: establishment of an environment for health promotion**

Includes the establishment of environments that encourage practical health habits, such as the creation of walking paths, gardens, greeneries, outcrops, cultural centers, tourist areas, smoke-free environments, and exercise facilities.

**3. Healthy lifestyle award: healthy living**

Methods to assist citizens in engaging in a healthy lifestyle, including obesity prevention; the prevention of hyperglycemia, hyperlipidemia, and hypertension; as well as tangible plans for healthy aging.

**4. Health sustainability award: healthy city sustainability through low-carbon and green energy**

Investigations into energy conservation and low-carbon policies, with emphasis on tangible results to share with other healthy cities.

**5. Health industry award: culture, leisure, or creative industries :**

Exploration of cases in these industries focused on the creation of procedures that result in encouraging healthy self-cultivation in citizens.

**6. Mental health award: mental health promotion**

Examinations of public mental health, including cases that foster better mental and physical health as well as suicide prevention. Emphasis given to tangible results that can be shared with other healthy city programs.

**7. Health safety award: city safety** Inspection of various city health circumstances, including those of road safety, water safety, violence prevention, physical safety, emergency care, and disaster rescue. This award includes reviews of disaster prevention, preparation, and recovery mechanisms that can lower the incidence of loss of life or property. Precedence given to cases with tangible results that can be shared with other healthy cities.

**8. Health equality award: health equality**

Inquiries into how to alleviate disparities in health quality. This category includes the exploration of cases focused on underprivileged groups and community welfare. Such programs should focus on attaining the goal of health promotion for the whole community and have tangible results that can be shared with other healthy cities.

**B. Senior Citizen-friendly Cities**

**1. Respect for the elderly award: respect for the elderly and community integration**

The pursuit of an atmosphere of respect to the elderly, including plans to encourage citizens to be conscious of their treatment of the elderly. Programs may focus on improving the situation of the elderly so that they may freely participate in post-retirement work, which would allow them to gain more respect in the community. Programs with tangible results preferred that can be shared with other healthy cities.

**2. Intimacy with the elderly award: social participation**

The creation of supportive environments with which to improve the aging process of the elderly. These environments should allow the elderly to more easily improve their lifestyle through leisure, social, cultural, and self-improvement events. The cooperation of families should be included, and results should be tangible and can be shared with other healthy cities.

**3. Removal of obstructions award: safe public spaces without obstructions**

Focusing on the needs of the elderly, women, children, and disabled, improvements should be made in services so that a higher level of consideration toward these groups is apparent. This award focuses on environmental improvements, safer facilities, and the removal of obstructions in public spaces. Tangible results that can be shared with other healthy cities are preferred.

**4. Traffic award: traffic flow**

Research into how elderly citizens move through public areas, with emphasis on public traffic and information. Projects should assure better safety, comfort, movement, and consideration for the elderly, especially in terms of application and hardware implementation. Results should be tangible and can be shared with other healthy cities.

**5. Safe living award: housing**

Studies into the comfort and safety of residential environments for senior citizens. Emphasis on reliable environments that meet service, equipment, and hygiene needs. Other focuses should include connecting families with their communities and the proper selection of healthy living environments. Tangible results that can be shared with other healthy cities required.

**6. Connection reward: communication and information**

Analysis of how elderly citizens interact with information and communication technology services, with emphasis on making these services more convenient and safer. The promotion of lifelong learning and individual knowledge should be stressed, and the project should result in tangible results.

**7. Health award: community and health services**

Research on both hardware and software that can facilitate care for the elderly. Includes the establishment of multifaceted services such as volunteer services, emergency planning, and health care as methods to more strongly connect the elderly to the community. Both mental and physical health should take prominence. Tangible results that can be shared with other healthy cities required.

**8. Anti-aging award: work and volunteer services**

The creation of work and volunteer opportunities for the elderly. Programs should encourage senior citizens to leave their homes in search of work or social activities. The ultimate goal is to raise the self-esteem of elderly people by showing them that they have a place in society. Submissions should have tangible results that can be shared with other healthy cities.