

Jen-Ai Hospital International Patient Center in Taichung, Taiwan

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Objective

Jen-Ai Hospital – Tali launched the first "International Patient Center" (IPC) in Taiwan, back in September 2003, to ensure access to medical care for the international community living in Taichung. From its humble beginnings by serving the expat communities in Taichung City, IPC has now grown to include serving foreigners living in Central Taiwan and the occasional tourists / visitors from abroad. This paper will share the experiences of Jen-Ai Hospital – Tali in their efforts of accommodating the increasing number of international patients in their hospital.

Materials and Methods

IPC provides free on-site interpretations in English and Japanese; and medical interpretations in 20+ languages can be arranged through bilingual staffs and volunteers with 3 days advance notice. The team has provided superior care for these international patients; took part in numerous activities organized by various international organizations in Taichung; implemented several projects that were "First in Taiwan"; etc. However, from looking at the internal marketing analysis, the main reason for the increase in the number of international patients was due to good word-of-mouth.

Results

To date, Jen-Ai Hospital IPC has assisted over 15,000 patient visits from 3,000+ international patients. Of special interest is that these patients have come from 91 different nationalities, which makes Jen-Ai Hospital - Tali with the distinction of having the most number of international patients with different nationalities in Taiwan. And not only are these figures significant, IPC has implemented 7 "First in Taiwan" projects to date, which have won 14 local / international awards and certificates, plus 21 oral and poster presentations that were accepted to various international conferences / congresses around the world, thus far.

Conclusion

IPC has proven to be extremely successful in increasing the number of international patients in a local hospital in Taichung City, by providing superior services to these international patients, who in turn recommends other foreigners to Jen-Ai Hospital - Tali. International Patient Center services should be made available to all foreigners living in every major city in Taiwan, as Medical Tourism project is developed in the future. A good word-of-mouth is instrumental in increasing the number of international patients (especially the number of nationalities) for any local hospitals, who wants to do well in the Medical Tourism arena.

Keywords

International Patient Center, Medical Tourism, Taiwan

