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During the Public Health Emergency, We Witness the True Value of the Tiered Health Care System through Telemedicine

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Abstract

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic 3 years ago, the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Taiwan has exceeded 10 million and over 10,000 people have died from the disease. Following the mutations of the virus and the adjustments of COVID-19 preventive measures, Taiwan citizens, the medical field, and Taiwan's society have to rapidly adapt to different challenges. During the prevalence of the Omicron variant in 2022, over 10 million citizens were infected within 6 months. However, Taiwanese people have shown unwavering resilience in the face of pandemic, let alone the possibility of social unrest. Instead, economic development continued as normal and Taiwan's GDP continued to grow. In addition to citizen's excellent health literacy, the contributions of Taiwan's firm and robust medical care system plays a crucial role in controlling the pandemic. Big hospitals not only provide health care services for patients with acute, severe, and emergent diseases as usual, but also should share the responsibility of treating patients with severe COVID-19 symptoms. Similarly, the primary care system not only provides services of common and chronic diseases, as well as routine vaccination, but also contributes to the diagnosis, treatment, and home-based care through telemedicine for patients with mild symptoms of COVID-19. The collaboration between hospitals and clinics demonstrates the value of the tiered health care system, which safeguards the health of Taiwanese people and serves as a global paradigm.

Keywords: telemedicine, tiered health care system, medical care, COVID-19, community health care group, New Taipei City Medical Association

疫情中，透過遠距醫療的實務， 看見分級醫療的價值

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摘要

Covid-19 Pandemic 三年多來，臺灣至今有超過1000 萬人確診，及1 萬多人不幸逝世！隨著病毒的突變，和防疫政策的調整，民眾、醫界乃至臺灣社會都接受著不同的考驗和試煉。尤其是2022 年的Omicron亞型變異株，在半年多有超過1000 萬民眾的大規模感染。然而臺灣的社會並沒有人心浮動，遑論社會動亂；經濟發展如常，GDP依舊上升。這除了臺灣人民優異的健康素質，堅韌的醫界體系功不可沒！大醫院在原本急、重、難、罕的醫療照顧之外，更負責COVID重症病患的收治；基層醫療也不遑多讓，除了持續提供一般疾病、慢性病照護、疫苗接種之外，更承擔輕症確診者的遠距判讀、遠距診療及遠距居家照顧；醫院、診所分工合作，充分展現了分級醫療的價值，共同守護了臺灣人民的健康，也成為全球的典範。

關鍵詞：遠距醫療，分級醫療，COVID-19，社區醫療群，新北市醫師公會