

**Report of the  
17<sup>th</sup> Scientific Meeting of Pacific Rim College of Psychiatrists (PRCP):  
Nov 3-5, 2016, Kaohsiung, Taiwan**

The 17<sup>th</sup> Scientific Meeting of PRCP was successfully held in Kaohsiung, Taiwan from November 3 to 5, 2016 at the Kaohsiung Exhibition Center. It was the first psychiatric conference to convene in this newly-opened commodious waterfront international exhibition and convention center. The meeting was also conjoined with the annual meeting of the Taiwan Society of Psychiatry (TSOP) on the last day.

The meeting received endorsement and support from the Kaohsiung City Government, the Bureau of Foreign Trade of Taiwan Ministry of Economic Affairs, Chang Gung Memorial Hospital, Fo Guang Shang Buddha Memorial Center, Taiwanese Society of Psychiatry, Taiwan Academy of Psychiatric Epidemiology, Taiwanese Society of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Taiwanese Society of Geriatric Psychiatry, and Taiwanese Society of Social and Community Psychiatry.

There were 753 participants from 26 countries, and among them, one third (248) were from the international, with countries (and delegates) as follows: Australia (10), Belize (1), Cambodia (1), Canada (12), China (45), Fiji (1), Finland (1), Hong Kong (9), India (6), Indonesia (19), Japan (50), Korea (21), Malaysia (4), Mongolia (1), Myanmar (1), Nepal (1), Nigeria (1), Philippines (4), Singapore (11), Swaziland (1), Switzerland (1), Thailand (33), Tuvalu (1), USA (8), and Vietnam (4). Travel awards were granted to 5 young psychiatrists from the developing countries.

The theme of the meeting is “Mental Health in a Dynamic Region: Creating Changes through Partnership”, and it had indeed demonstrated a strong partnership among the colleagues of Asia Pacific region and presented a total of 194 posters and 226 oral presentations. Many were the results of their long-term collaborative work, like the REAP (Research on Asia Prescription Pattern) consortium with centers from 15 Asian countries, the TOP (Teachers of Psychiatry) education and training program led by Professor EH Kua, the South East Asian community mental health and rehabilitation programs coordinated by Professor Du-Jian Tsai, the East Asian research on addiction and substance use disorders, and the disaster relief program etc.

It was however difficult to accommodate such a substantial amount of presentations in just less than 3 days of the conference as a half day was allocated for a cultural

event at the Buddha Memorial Center. The program was certainly tight and only a very short time was given for each presenter in most parallel sessions and leaving no extra time for discussion. It could have been much better if the meeting was held for 3.5 than just 3 days.

The social events were equally fruitful. The reception dinner was held on the first evening at the Banana Pier, beginning with the ceremony of traditional welcome lion dance and dances of “the God of Third Prince”. The dinner was served at a warehouse-turned water-front restaurant hosted by the deputy mayor of Kaohsiung, Ms YC Hsu, followed by an introduction of Kaohsiung city presented by the deputy chief of Kaohsiung Bureau of Tourism. After the dinner, participants were arranged for an exceptional 70-minute cruising tour in the harbor on a luxurious cruise ship serving on board with wine, cheese and beer. They enjoyed a lovely evening and the beautiful night scenery of the city with its glamorous lights reflecting on the water way.

In the afternoon of the second day, all participants were transferred by bus to the Buddha Memorial Center, a tourist spot that is located at about 40-minute driving distance from the city center of Kaohsiung. Guided tour was provided and participants took the opportunity to visit this magnificent center of Eastern culture after the plenary speech given by Professor Mitchell Weiss on cultural epidemiology and a forum on disaster management and recovery. In the evening, a blessing ceremony for peace was arranged and delivered by the Abbot of Fu Guang Shang Monastery in front of the 108-meter tall Buddha statue. With an LED lamp on their hands, participants lined up and joined the ceremony that lasted for about 20 minutes. Before leaving the Center, a group photo was taken under the foot of the great statue of Buddha with all lamps laid on the floor aligning with the word “**PRCP 2016**” (picture attached).

To make this conference successful and attractive, we adopted several approaches that were different from the previous meetings. 1). A cost-down strategy: We did not employ any conference company to run for the meeting, but we made partnership with the local government and organizations and utilized whatever available resources that we can get. 2). Full support from the local government: As financial support from the industry is drying out, it is vital to have assistance and support from the local governmental specifically in cutting the rates of conference rooms. 3). To make the meeting affordable: High rate of registration fees are seen in most conferences, but a significant lower rate of registration fees endorsed in this meeting

was certainly attractive and drawn wider participation from trainees and those from the low-income countries. 4). To combine academic activities and tourism: The design was to use this meeting as a platform to promote local tourism. On the other hand, it also utilized resources of other agencies like the local board of tourism to balance the cost. 5). Employing medical students as volunteers: We trained local and foreign undergraduate medical students as volunteers at the meeting. Other than running down the cost of manpower, it is also a good opportunity for these medical students to have an early exposure to international academic conference and hoping that some of them will choose psychiatry as their future career. 6). To organize a green conference: We tried to save any unnecessary printings and their costs, like the printed abstract book which is usually discarded by many participants immediately after the meeting. We did not provide a printed abstract book, but the abstracts and photos taken at this meeting were however uploaded to the conference web and APP for a year and participants can freely retrieve at any time ([www.prcp2016.org](http://www.prcp2016.org)).

Most importantly, this conference could not have been successful if without the enthusiastic support and active participation of the Board and PRCP members. The AGM took place on Nov 5, 2016, and the new President, Executive Committee and President-elect were introduced. Travel awards were also presented at the general assembly. During the farewell dinner, participants enjoyed the Chinese food and good wine at the prestige Palace Club on the 77<sup>th</sup> floor of the iconic building with a panoramic view of the city and harbor of Kaohsiung. The mood was high as singing and dances were going on even without a karaoke or music. With such a success, several centers have shown their great interests in bidding for the next meeting.

Suggestions for improvements are:

1. Need more time, three days are not enough. A similar suggestion had also been suggested up after the last meeting in Vancouver.
2. Lack of opportunity to view posters because of the tight schedule. We would like to have best poster awards, and more time could be spent at poster contest.
3. Board or committee meeting can be held before or after the conference, so that all the members could have spent more time in the presentations.
4. More program for young psychiatrists.

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*Greetings  
& Best Wishes  
for the New Year*

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