



Building Bridges

Under its New Southbound Policy, Taiwan is expanding health and medical cooperation with Malaysia.

BY KELLY HER
PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHANG GUNG MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

The inauguration of the state-of-the-art Taiwan Advance MedTech Centre (TAMC) in Malaysia last January ushered in a new era of cooperation between the two countries. Made possible by funding from the Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW), the facility was established by Chang Gung Memorial Hospital (CGMH) in northern Taiwan's Taoyuan City.

The center, located in the outlying state of Penang, serves as a demonstration site showcasing innovative medical devices and supplies, rehabilitation robotics and smart health care solutions produced by high-tech companies in Taiwan. It also hosts training programs and facilitates international aid and medical care for local patients, including remote services. "Taiwan is internationally renowned for its high standard of care,"

01 & 02. Employees of Chang Gung Memorial Hospital in northern Taiwan's Taoyuan City demonstrate the functions of medical devices at Taiwan Advance MedTech Centre in Malaysia's northwestern state of Penang.

said Wu Ling-ying (吳玲瑩), an MOHW representative at Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Malaysia. "The country is gratified to improve lives by sharing its expertise and resources."

TAMC was launched under the MOHW's One Country, One Center (1C1C) initiative implemented in 2018 in line with the government's New Southbound Policy, which aims to strengthen Taiwan's ties with the 10 Association of Southeast Asian Nations member states, six South Asian countries, Australia and New Zealand. The project is boosting collaboration with South and Southeast Asian countries in the four key areas of capacity building, industrial linkage, supply chain management and epidemic control. At the same time, the centers assess local market opportunities and medical regulations, create culturally sensitive treatment environments and provide health consultations.

Top medical institutions such as CGMH were invited to participate in 1C1C, with each assigned to a specific country. Last year, the MOHW began expanding the initiative, bringing in additional Taiwan medical centers in Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam. China Medical University Hospital (CMUH) in central Taiwan's Taichung City was selected to join CGMH in Malaysia. Between



03. Representatives from China Medical University Hospital in central Taiwan's Taichung City and Rejang Medical Centre in the Malaysian state of Sarawak celebrate the signing of a memorandum of understanding on public health cooperation and industrial development in March.
04. Chen Chun-chung, left, chief of CMUH's Neurosurgery Department, prepares to give a lecture in Sarawak in May.

03 & 04. Courtesy of China Medical University Hospital

CGMH's facility in the peninsula and CMUH's presence in Borneo, residents in both the eastern and western regions now have increased access to a wide range of medical devices, services and technologies.

Like CGMH, CMUH organizes health lectures and provides consultations for local communities. In March it also signed memorandums of understanding with Borneo Medical Centre and Rejang Medical Centre in Sarawak to spur further public health cooperation and industrial development. Enthusiastic responses to prospective outreach programs by the university hospital reveal the high demand for information sharing and medical services.

"Our mission is to work with health care providers and medical equipment suppliers to improve efficiency and quality of care," a CGMH spokesperson said. Thanks to public and private resources invested in the country's international medical outreach, initiatives have seen considerable success. "These efforts not only facilitate deeper integration of Taiwan's medtech supply chains into the region's health care systems, but also boost Taiwan's visibility and image on the global stage," said the MOHW's Wu. "But above all, they underscore the government's commitment to improving health and well-being in New Southbound Policy target countries and beyond."

