

## Mission of Medicine

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Among the four sufferings of life, illness is the most painful. During her charity visits, Dharma Master Cheng Yen realized that many families were poor as a result of sickness. Therefore, she founded the Tzu Chi Free Clinic for the Poor, the start of Tzu Chi's mission of medicine. In 1986, the Hualien Tzu Chi General Hospital opened; its philosophy was "respect life" and "take the patient as the centre".

The Taiwan medical network was completed by opening hospitals in Yuli, Kuanshan, Dalin, Taipei and Taichung. The medical team, aided by the large number of volunteers, takes care of all aspects of the patient, including his body and spirit and that of his family, as well as that of the doctors and nurses.

The goal is to care for the body, mind and spirit of the patient. From the city to the countryside, from the high mountains to the sea, Tzu Chi's medical network cares for the people of Taiwan with the latest technology and the warmth of humanity.



The Tzu Chi International Medical Association (TIMA) was established in 1996: it now has 58 branches in 11 countries and more than 7,000 professional medical volunteers. It has provided free medical services in 39 countries around the world. The volunteers come from different countries and, on a regular basis, visit remote mountain areas, islands and villages without medical services, to provide treatment and check-ups. They have extended their services to the homeless in the cities, pensioners and other welfare organizations. Whenever there are major disasters at home or abroad, TIMA members will go to support emergency medical rescue team, hoping that every precious life will receive proper care in time, anywhere in the world.

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- 1972: Tzu Chi Free Clinic for the Poor established
- 1986~2007: Completion of the Tzu Chi medical network in Taiwan
- TIMA has 58 branches and has provided services in 39 countries