

Interview with Prof. Chiou: learn new technique to bring better results to patients, and bring peace to terminal cancer patients by hospice and palliative care

Received: 16 January 2018; Accepted: 16 March 2018; Published: 13 April 2018.

doi: 10.21037/tro.2018.03.04

View this article at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21037/tro.2018.03.04>

Experts' introduction

Dr. Jeng-Fong Chiou (*Figure 1*) is the vice president of Taipei Cancer Center and director of Department of Radiation Oncology, Taipei Medical University Hospital. His researches interests are mainly about radiation therapy, chemotherapy, immunotherapy and molecular biological, radiological surgery, cancer gene sequencing, target therapy, volumetric-modulated arc therapy (VMAT), complementary and alternative medicine (CAM). Furthermore, he has been devoted to cancer treatment and palliative care for decades.

The Department of Hospice and Palliative Care of Taipei Medical University Hospital has been led by Dr. Chiou. By providing physical, social, emotional and spiritual supports to critically ill patients, the team led by Dr. Chiou has enhanced the quality of life of patients and patients' family.

Editor's note

On December 16th and 17th, 2017, the "2017 Taiwan Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology Conference: 'Bring Insight into Impacts' and Both Sides across the Strait Forum" was held at Taipei Medical University, Taiwan. The discussed topics in the conference were mainly related to precision medicine, proton therapy, cellular therapy, and even a report on the advanced knowledge of nasopharyngeal carcinoma and head and neck cancers. AME Taipei Division had the honor to have an interview with the chairman, Dr. Chiou, of this academic conference to share Dr. Chiou's experience about and expertise in radiation oncology and hospice and palliative care (*Figure 2*).

In the interview, Dr. Chiou shared the highlight of the conference, his experience of being a pioneer in Taiwan to learn stereotactic radiotherapy for hepatocellular carcinoma

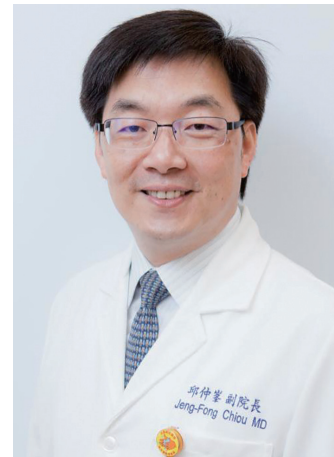


Figure 1 Dr. Jeng-Fong Chiou.



Figure 2 TRO editor took a photo with Dr. Jeng-Fong Chiou after the interview.

and MR-guided ultrasonic surgery for painful bony metastases. Last but not least, he also shared the importance of helping patients feel peaceful when they are at the last stage of cancer. To know more, please refer to the following in-depth interview with Dr. Jeng-Fong Chiou by *TRO*.

TRO: Please briefly introduce yourself to our readers and share the highlight of 2017 Taiwan Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology Conference?

Prof. Chiou: I am the superintendent of Taipei Cancer Center, which belongs to Taipei Medical University. I have devoted myself into my expertise, radiation oncology, for more than 27 years. About today's conference, there are four major topics in this conference: translational research, proton therapy, hypofractionated radiotherapy, and innovative entrepreneurship.

Speaking of translational research and proton therapy, nowadays, cancer treatment, precision medicine, immunotherapy, and cellular therapy are topics which have been very popular and discussed widely. De facto, all these therapies originated from translational research. Undoubtedly, with the devotion to research related to medicine, we could have a better medical environment. For having a better research environment in Taiwan, there is one proton and radiation therapy center in Linkou Chang Gung Memorial Hospital. Moreover, a new proton center is planned to be built in Kaohsiung Chang Gung Memorial Hospital in 2018. As proton and radiation therapy is an important topic for oncologists now, it is estimated that almost ten proton and radiation therapy centers will be built in the future.

On the other hand, hypofractionated radiotherapy has progressed a lot in recent years because of technical advances. More importantly, the survival rate of patients who received hypofractionated radiotherapy is also comparable to traditional therapy. The last topic of today's conference is about innovation. Some of my colleagues from Taiwan Society Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology have some new devices and have set up a new company to help young men to present their new products to reach out more people. To sum up, being innovative and learning the latest treatments is essential for a doctor to provide patients with better care.

TRO: As we know you have been devoted to hospice and palliative care for many years, could you share some unforgettable moments when devoting yourself to hospice and palliative care?

Prof. Chiou: In addition to radiation oncology, I have also devoted myself to hospice and palliative care since I was a young resident. At that time, I thought that making

a patient recover from the illness is the most anticipated result for a doctor. However, some severe conditions hinder patients' from recovering. Consequently, I wanted to provide more to patients with severe conditions. I just thought that if I could help patients feel peaceful before they leave the world, it would be very meaningful.

Hospice and palliative care is rather important to patients whose cancer is at last stage. After all, even though all treatments and medicines are devoted to cure patients, some patients in the terminal stage of cancer could not still be cured. As a consequence, when patients are in the terminal stage, it is more important and essential to help them feel comfortable and peaceful. That's the reason why I have kept working in hospice and palliative care program for 27 years. My team and I have provided not only physical treatment but also psychosocial support to patients.

TRO: You were a pioneer to introduce the new technology into Taiwan, such as stereotactic radiotherapy for hepatocellular carcinoma and MR-guided ultrasonic surgery for painful bony metastases. What do you envision the impacts of particle therapy? Will it be a new technology that may revolutionize radiotherapy in both Taiwan healthcare system and on a global scale?

Prof. Chiou: I feel I was very blessed to have the opportunity to introduce some innovative techniques to Taiwan. Around 20 years ago, no one had heard about stereotactic body radiation therapy. Detecting the importance of stereotactic body radiation therapy, I decided to study abroad to learn the knowledge and skills of stereotactic body radiation therapy. Fortunately, my supervisor also encouraged me to have a training course to learn this new technology in Seattle, USA. After finishing the training course, another machine for stereotactic radiation therapy was introduced into Taipei Medical University Hospital. It was a strong weapon which could be used to treat the cancer. Hence, I went abroad (Los Angeles and Rome) again to learn the knowledge and skills about this new technique.

After finishing the overseas training, I brought back the newest knowledge and skill to Taipei Medical University Hospital. I have always been thankful to my supervisors because they were willing to appoint me to undergo overseas training when I was a young doctor. Furthermore, they also suggested the hospitals to purchase new machines to apply the knowledge I brought back from abroad. After

introducing the new technology to Taiwan, I made more efforts on teaching Taiwanese doctors how to apply the new technology. Gradually, more and more doctors knew how to manipulate the new technology. Most important of all, new treatments could be applied when treating patients with special conditions, which has brought a better result to patients.

TRO: Please give some suggestions to young medical school students or young doctors who would like to devote to radiation therapy.

Prof. Chiou: As a radiation oncologist, we might be limited in our fields. In fact, radiation oncologists can do more things than they imagine. For example, they can also devote themselves to translational research, innovative technology, or even learn about precision medicine. Compared to radiation oncologists in Taiwan, radiation oncologists in Japan and Europe devote themselves to more various research fields. The training system for radiation oncologists in Taiwan is more like American system. Thus, radiation oncologists in Taiwan usually focus on one field and the same condition could be seen in USA. However, focusing on one field might not be the best. As a result, I encourage young doctors who serve in the same department and my students to learn more new knowledge. By learning new and more knowledge, even though focusing on one field in the end, it could still broaden doctors' horizons. In conclusion, doctors should open their minds, and keep learning new concepts and skills.

Acknowledgments

We highly thanked Dr. Long-Sheng Lu for providing great help for the interview. Without Dr. Lu, we couldn't accomplish this article. Also, we would like to extend

gratitude to Dr. Chiou-Jeng-Fong for sharing his expertise and experience in the interview.

Funding: None.

Footnote

Provenance and Peer Review: This article was commissioned by the editorial office, *Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology* for the series "Meet the Professor". The article did not undergo external peer review.

Conflicts of Interest: The author has completed the ICMJE uniform disclosure form (available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.21037/tro.2018.03.04>). The series "Meet the Professor" was commissioned by the editorial office without any funding or sponsorship. Tung-Lun Shih reports that he is a full-time employee of AME publishing company (publisher of the journal). The author has no other conflicts of interest to declare.

Ethical Statement: The author is accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

Open Access Statement: This is an Open Access article distributed in accordance with the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0), which permits the non-commercial replication and distribution of the article with the strict proviso that no changes or edits are made and the original work is properly cited (including links to both the formal publication through the relevant DOI and the license). See: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>.

(Science Editor: Tung-Lun Shih, TRO, tro@amegroups.com)

doi: 10.21037/tro.2018.03.04

Cite this article as: Shih TL. Interview with Prof. Chiou: learning new technique to bring better results to patients, and bring peace to terminal cancer patients by hospice and palliative care. *Ther Radiol Oncol* 2018;2:16.