

## Prof. Yih-Sharng Chen: a new era—to breakthrough the old times

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### Expert introduction

Professor Chen is the Chairman of Cardiovascular Surgery Division in National Taiwan University Hospital since 2010. He is also the Chair Elect of Asia-Pacific ELSO. He finished his medical education and training in National Taiwan University Hospital and overseas. His research interests focus on pediatric cardiac surgery, coronary artery bypass grafting (CABG) and heart valve surgery. He is not only a talented pediatric surgeon, but also a pioneer in the use of extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) for patients with postcardiotomy cardiogenic shock in Taiwan. The study has benefitted numerous lives ever since. And it shows an increasing survival rate for the patients with this ‘life-saving’ treatment (*Figure 1*).

With great honor to host the 24th Annual Meeting of Asian Society for Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgery (ASCVTS) in conjunction with 9<sup>th</sup> AATS/ASCVTS Postgraduate Course in Taipei last year, he took the important role as the Chairman.

This year, he served as the Chairman of 16th Annual Meeting of Taiwan Association of Thoracic & Cardiovascular Surgery (TATCS), leading the forum for advanced research and up-to-date findings in the field of thoracic and cardiovascular surgery. With the comprehensive scientific program which covered the award-winning speeches, oral presentations, and the invited international speakers’ lectures, the congress has successfully ended in October, 2017.

### Interview (*Figure 2*)

**JTD:** *Could you share your very first pediatric surgery or an unforgettable case in your 30 years career?*

**Prof. Chen:** Through my 30 years career as a CVS doctor, there is one particular case that I cannot forget. It gave me much impression and set a milestone for my career. The struggling case is ‘Transposition of Great Arteries’. The patient had received arterial switch operation when he was a neonatal. Seven to eight years



**Figure 1** Prof. Yih-Sharng Chen.



**Figure 2** Interview with Prof. Yih-Sharng Chen: a new era—to breakthrough the old times (1).

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later, the artery route became huge. And I performed a valve-sparing procedure for the boy. It took about 12 hours to complete the whole operation. During the operation, I took a lot of time removing the adhesion. Finally, I preserve the valve for the boy. And the study was published in JTCVS, which is an achievement and quite an amazing moment for me. If we do something good and give efforts to the patient as much as possible, he doesn’t need to have anticoagulant and he can survive the procedure.



**Figure 3** Photo of Prof. Chen smiling during the interview.



**Figure 4** Photo with Prof. Chen after the interview.

**JTD:** *During one of your interview last year, you've mentioned, 'After the 30-year-development in the field of Cardiovascular Surgery in Taiwan, we are facing obstacles.' How could we make a breakthrough on this situation?*

**Prof. Chen:** In the past 20 to 30 years, we followed the rules and regulations from the United States and Europe. In China and in Taiwan, we don't have our own principle and leading innovation. This is a segment that needs to be reinforced.

And new obstacles we are facing in recent years are the yet solved reversement problem, the insufficient manpower, and the lack energy of young surgeon in Taiwan. To make a

breakthrough, we must improve the working environment first, increase the benefit for young residencies and give them new ideas to have the motivation for more innovation.

Working environment can be improved by the community. On the other side, for now, it depends on every individual. Some have enough ambition to ignore the problem. They devote themselves to the industry and overcome the obstacles. To others, it will always be an issue they will never stop arguing. There are several factors that hold the current status. It not only involves working hours, but also includes working environment, nurses and the reversement. Nevertheless, doctors themselves are the ones that can reconstruct the situation. I would like to encourage them to expand their thinking, explore new territories and techniques in the medical field. This is the way to improve the whole medical system.

However, in the long-run, the system should definitely be improved, including nurse power and reasonable working hours to balance the life between work and family. To maintain a well-functioned and trusted hospital, every role in the hospital is crucial. Back in our generation, we worked as much as we could. There was no time to think whether it would be overwhelmed, but nowadays, it is not a good way to survive.

**JTD:** *You've said, 'You live everyday as the last day of your life.' If tomorrow is the last day of your life, what would you do?*

**Prof. Chen:** I would take off. If I knew tomorrow is my last day, I would not be here. I shall take off, accompany my family and stay by their sides. No matter what current status I am in, family is the most important part of my life after all (*Figure 3*).

**JTD:** *In the end, as the chief of the TATCS 16th Annual Meeting, could you briefly talk about the highlights and topic of this years' Annual Meeting?*

**Prof. Chen:** In this year's TATCS Annual Meeting, one of the highlights is the new innovation in the field of cardiac surgery. In cardiac surgery, we have new innovation in gene therapy in the lab, new technology for heart valve, and aortic stenosis. For aortic stenosis, we not only have transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR), but also surgical aortic valve replacement (SAVR). In thoracic surgery, we have more minimally invasive and more localization of the small lung nodule. It will improve the outcome and technology for the surgery (*Figure 4*).

### Acknowledgements

None.

### Footnote

*Conflicts of Interest:* The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

### References

1. Fan WE. Interview with Prof. Yih-Sharng Chen: a new era—to breakthrough the old times. *Asvide* 2018;5:054. Available online: <http://asvidett.amegroups.com/article/view/22657>

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