

## Taiwan looking to strengthen health ties in Asia-Pacific: Chen

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The annual Global Health Forum in Taiwan opened on 28 Oct in Taipei, with Vice President Chen Chien-jen saying that the nation is looking forward to strengthening Asia-Pacific ties to increase cooperation in the areas of medicine and health, and promoting health-related industrial links.

The theme of the forum is “Resilience: New Challenges and Opportunities for Global Health.”

Taiwan is a member of the global public health community and it has taken the annual forum seriously for the past 14 years, Chen said.

Many nations are facing the challenges brought by rapidly aging populations and high prevalence of chronic diseases that call for better medical and public health environments as well as social welfare services, he said.

Chen praised the National Health Insurance program for its nearly universal coverage and effective financial management, achieving the goal of equal healthcare for all.

He said the most challenging public health issue the nation faces is its aging society, as more than 20 percent of the population is forecast to be older than 65 by 2026, so the government is pushing its 10-year Long-term Care Service Program 2.0 to tackle the issue.

Taiwan has an advanced and high-quality healthcare system and disease prevention network, as well as world-class pharmaceutical and medical equipment industries, Chen said.

The approval this year of Taiwan’s application to become a member of the International Conference on Harmonization of

Technical Requirements for Registration of Pharmaceuticals for Human Use shows that these achievements are internationally recognized, he said.

Taiwan, building on its cooperation with other nations, is using the government's New Southbound Policy to promote cooperation on healthcare with India and ASEAN members and looks forward to strengthening regional ties with Asia-Pacific countries in healthcare.

The Ministry of Health and Welfare said the forum invited 68 speakers from 34 nations, adding that more than 1,200 specialists and officials from around the world are expected to take part in the two-day event.