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Letter to the editor

# Current dental-associated professionals in Taiwan



Dear Editor

Dental technician is the only one dental-associated professional that has well established cultivated education system and certified by the Ministry of Health and Welfare in Taiwan. This letter is in reference to a series interesting articles that we read in the recent issues in Journal of Dental Sciences regarding the other dental-associated professionals including dental assistants,<sup>1</sup> dental radiation technologists,<sup>2</sup> and oral hygienists<sup>3</sup> in Taiwan. The authors indicated the historical overview, development, education system, and manpower survey which could provide the important information to policy-decision makers.

Dental-associated professionals employed in every type of dental practice are the backbones of dental team. They could support dentists to provide more effective patient care and even facilitate patient safety. Many dental procedures such as tooth preparation, assess cavity preparation, and extraction are irreversible. Teamwork is essential and prominent between dentist and dental-associated professionals for providing oral healthcare. The newest hospital accreditation also emphasizes the patient-centered oral care by team resource management. For example, the dentist's home visits with dental-associated professionals have been successfully conducted in central Taiwan for maintaining vulnerable patients' oral health at home.<sup>4</sup>

Dental-associated professionals are important to assist dentists, promote public oral health, take dental radiology, and fabricate prosthesis. With the alliance of team resource management for patient, it is believed to enhance quality of oral healthcare and would reduce the oral health inequality.<sup>5</sup> In Taiwan, Department of Oral Health, Ministry of Health and Welfare has been launched in May, 2022. It is the time to re-visit the professionalism, occupation, and practice direction of dental-associated professionals in daily dental practice. We are paying close attention to the new policies such as education, examination, training, and practice of dental-associated professionals in the future.

## Declaration of competing interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest relevant to this article.

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