

# Health Care Needs among New Immigrate Spouses in Taiwan

Tzu-Chun Chen<sup>1</sup>, Su-Hsien Chang<sup>2</sup>, Ching-Len Yu<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Tainan Hospital, Department of Health

<sup>2</sup>National Tainan Institute of Nursing, Department of Senior Citizen Services

<sup>3</sup>Kung-Shen University, Department of Environment Engineering

**Objective:** To examine health care needs among new immigrant in Taiwan. This is a descriptive research design.

## Methods:

▲ This study was a single group, cohort study research design.

▲ A purposive sampling method was used to recruit foreign and mainland Chinese spouses in Taiwan.

▲ Sample selection criteria: (1) spouse was citizen of Taiwan, (2) conscious clear, (3) be able to speak Chinese or Taiwanese, (4) agree to participate the study.

▲ SPSS 16.0 for Windows was used to analyze the data.

▲ An alpha of 0.05 was set as the level of significance. The data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics, *independent t test*, and *Pearson correlation*.

## Results:

▲ Three hundred and forty-seven new immigrant spouses were recruited in southern Taiwan. The age of subjects ranged from 21-35 years old (58.5%). The majority subjects' educational level was junior high school (33.1%) and high received (31.4%). The majority of subjects came from southeast countries (62.5%). Results showed that majority of subject perceived good health (71.1%). Table 1 summarized the demographic information of subjects.

**Table 1. Demographic data of study subjects**

Variables	Number of cases	Percentage
Gender		
Male	35	10.1%
Female	312	89.9%
Age		
<20 years old	7	2.0%
21-35 years old	203	58.5%
36-50 years old	115	33.1%
51-65 years old	18	5.2%
>65 years old	4	1.2%
Education level		
Elementary (< = 6 years)	36	10.4%
Junior high school (7-9 years)	115	33.1%
High school (9-12 years)	109	31.4%
Junior college (13-15 years)	30	8.6%
College/University	48	13.6%
Graduate school	9	2.6%

▲ Subjects also reported that they do not have other health insurance rather than national health insurance (72.3%). When subjects felt un-comfortable, only 47% of them went to visit a doctor. Thirty-three percent of them did was forbearance, and 18.2% used medicine without prescription. The major reason they did not go to visit a doctor immediate when they were sick was lack of time. Table 3 and 4 showed subjects' health care needs and behaviors.

**Table 3. Health care seeking ability and needs of subjects**

Variables	Number of cases	Percentage
Having insurance outside of NIH		
Yes	96	27.7%
No	251	72.3%
Convenience to visit a physician		
very convenience	97	28.0%
convenience	188	54.2%
ordinary	52	15.0%
inconvenience	7	2.0%
very inconvenience	3	0.9%
Used go to a same clinic or a same hospital		
all the time	21	6.1%
most of time	136	39.2%
sometimes	183	52.7%
changed most of time	5	1.4%
changed all the time	2	0.6%
Usually to visit a physician		
all the time	14	4.0%
most of time	101	29.1%
sometimes	221	63.7%
changed most of time	10	2.9%
changed all the time	1	0.3%
Perceived health status		
Very healthy	47	13.5%
healthy	200	57.6%
ordinary	92	26.5%
not healthy	7	2.0%
very not healthy	1	0.3%
With one or more chronic diseases		
Yeas	20	5.8%
No	327	94.2%

▲ Table 5 showed the correlations between health seeking behaviors and processes among New Immigrate Spouses in Taiwan.

**Table 5. The correlation between health seeking behaviors and processes**

Variables	Convenience to visit a clinic/hospital	Used go to a same clinic/hospital	Used visit a same physician	Easy to collect medical information	Easy to obtain a medical information
Convenience to visit a clinic/hospital	-	.168**	.034	.185**	.124*
Used go to a same clinic/hospital	.168**	-	.625**	.102	.047
Used visit a same physician	.034	.625**	-	.077	.087
Easy to collect medical information	.185**	.102	.077	-	.635**
Easy to obtain a medical information	.124*	.047	.087	.635**	-

\* p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01;

▲ Reasons for subjects asked for assistance showed in table 2.

**Table 2. Reasons for subjects to seek assistance**

Variables	Number of cases	Percentage
Visiting outpatient department		
Respiratory system problem	127	36.6%
Injury/intoxication	10	2.9%
Dermatology problems	31	8.9%
Bone or muscle problems	23	6.6%
Digestive system problems	43	12.4%
Urology system problems	38	11.0%
Diabetes	3	0.9%
Dental health problem	4	1.2%
Liver problem	1	0.3%
For physical exam	1	0.3%
Regularly pregnancy exam	3	0.9%
Visiting ER		
Respiratory system problem	14	4.0%
Injury/intoxication	4	1.2%
Dermatology problems	3	0.9%
Bone or muscle problems	5	1.4%
Digestive system problems	9	2.6%
Urology system problems	3	0.9%
Others	6	1.7%

▲ The study found that the presence of having insurance outside of NIH (National Health Insurance) affected subjects' perceptions of difficulty to seek medical information. If subjects have had insurance outside of NIH, they perceived that it is easy to find medical information (t = 2.085, p = .038).

**Table 4. Health seeking behaviors of subjects**

Variables	Number of cases	Percentage
How to deal with physical uncomfortable		
Visiting a physician immediately	163	47.0%
Taking medication without prescription	63	18.2%
Forbearance	114	32.9%
Seeking alternative therapy	5	1.4%
Others	2	0.5%
Using 2 or more treatment at the same time		
Yes	92	26.5%
No	255	73.5%
Use to collect medical information for health		
Yes	154	44.4%
No	193	55.6%
Process of making medical decision		
affected by friends	131	37.8%
affected by adults parents	15	4.3%
affected by relatives	105	30.3%
discussion with other families	86	24.8%
others	10	2.9%

▲ The study found that the presence of having insurance outside of NIH (National Health Insurance) affected subjects' perceptions of difficulty to seek medical information. If subjects have had insurance outside of NIH, they perceived that it is easy to find medical information (t = 2.085, p = .038).

## Conclusion:

▲ This study is important for health care workers in Taiwan to understand health care needs among new immigrant spouses in Taiwan.

▲ Health care worker in Taiwan should used these information to assist new immigrant spouses to maintain and improve their health.

**Key words:** Health Care Needs, New Immigrate, Taiwan