

TOP NEWS

Public satisfaction in Taiwan's NHI system 2nd best since 1995

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NHIA Director-General Lee Po-chang leads a seminar in reviewing the results of the latest NHI satisfaction survey Nov. 8 in Taipei City. (CNA)

Public satisfaction in Taiwan's National Health Insurance system hit 83.1 percent this year, up from 81 percent in 2015 for the second best result since its launch in 1995, according to the latest survey released Nov. 8 by the NHI Administration under the Ministry of Health and Welfare.

A total of 85 percent of respondents were satisfied with medical services provided at NHI-authorized facilities, with 49.6 percent of these pleased with the good standard of service and attitude of the health care professionals. In addition, the majority was satisfied with the system's key categories of inexpensive medical care, 49 percent, and ease of access to treatment, 41.8 percent, both unchanged from last year's survey.

Significant improvements were recorded among low-income households, residents in remote areas, users aged 50 and above and women. According to the NHIA, this trend reflects well on the system's scope of coverage and range of benefits for disadvantaged groups.

The annual survey, first conducted in 1995, comprises a random sampling of 2,024 users aged 20 and above from a total sample of 12,000. Its best-ever rate of 85.2 percent was recorded in 2010.

NHIA Director-General Lee Po-chang said the system is an invaluable national asset and a testament to the efforts of its dedicated and hardworking health care professionals. The NHI helps those who need it most by enabling even the most financially disadvantaged people in the remotest areas to access medical services, he added.

According to Lee, the NHIA has reinstated coverage for economically disadvantaged users, a move in line with President Tsai Ing-wen's pledge to strengthen the social safety net. This is definitely a contributing factor in the rise of this year's NHI satisfaction rate, he said.

Going forward, the results of the survey will serve as the basis for improvements and reforms aimed at better meeting the needs of NHI users, Lee said. These include advancing medical treatment standards, enhancing service convenience, strengthening communications channels and further safeguarding public health.

The NHI is a world-class public health system widely regarded as one of Taiwan's most impressive public sector achievements. The scheme covers more than 99 percent of the island's 23 million people, providing them with easy access to a comprehensive range of high-quality medical services. (SCK-E)

Write to Taiwan Today at ttonline@mofa.gov.tw