

My Experience as APCNS President; Future Challenges

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The Asia Pacific Clinical Nutrition Society was established by Professor Mark Lawrence Wahlqvist about 20 years ago. Dr. Wahlqvist shared knowledge among doctors, dietitians, and nutritionists from non-English speaking countries, and he encouraged them to publish scientific papers in English. The Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition was thus created, and now Dr. Duo Li is the editor-in-chief. I was the president for four years from 2018 to 2022, but in light of the Sustainable Development Goals announced by the United Nations in 2015, there are many problems in the Asia-Pacific region. We would better remind the five Ps in 2030 Agenda. The Goals and targets will stimulate action over the next eight years in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet:

- **People:** we are determined to end poverty and hunger in all their forms and dimensions and ensure that all human beings can fulfill their potential in dignity and equality and a healthy environment.
- **Planet:** we are determined to protect the world from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing its natural resources, and taking urgent action on climate change, so that it can support the needs of the present and future generations.
- **Prosperity:** We are determined to ensure that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives and that economic, social, and technological progress occurs in harmony with nature.

- **Peace:** We are determined to foster peaceful, just, and inclusive societies free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.
- **Partnership:** We are determined to mobilize the means required to implement this Agenda through a revitalized Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focuses in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people.

The interlinkages and integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals are crucial in ensuring that the purpose of the new Agenda is realized. If we realize our ambitions across the full extent of the Agenda, the life of all will be profoundly improved, and our world will be transformed for the better.

A pandemic with the new coronavirus struck the world, leading to widespread poverty, the collapse of the healthcare system, and the loss of educational opportunities. Moreover, the lack of global cooperation due to the division of politics and economy has become clear, and sustainable development goals are in jeopardy. The impact is significant, especially for vulnerable people, countries, and regions, and there is concern that the world will unite and overcome the crisis.

Nowadays, we are better positioned to exchange views on nutrition and health across the Asia Pacific region. Past sessions of the Asia Pacific Conference on Clinical Nutrition have fostered collab-

orative programs between local nutrition societies. I would encourage members of APCNS to go even further and reach out to other scientific organizations with broader global concerns.

I would point to four significant issues for future study.

The first is about obesity and other lifestyle-related diseases, such as diabetes and hypertension. Unhealthy working environments, poor living conditions, and dietary habits lead to unavoidable consequences in modern life.

The second is on aging. In parallel with longer life, expectancy, frailty, sarcopenia, and dementia inevitably increase in prevalence. The speed of population aging is defined as the number of years required for populations over age 60 to double. It took only 26 years to see the proportion of older people increasing from 7% to 14% in Japan. In other Asian countries, population aging speed is expected to be even quicker than in Japan. For example, in South Korea and Vietnam, doubling will take only 18 years; in Singapore, 19 years; in Thailand, 22 years; and in China, 23 years. A severe problem on the horizon is the increasing burdens on medical and nursing care services, as physiological deterioration is commonly observed in older people. Appropriate dietary and physical interventions are becoming more and more relevant. Self-esteem and living motivation should be encouraged by society as a whole. The Japanese experience could address population aging as a global health issue.

The third topic that I wish to emphasize is the double burdens of obesity and starvation among deprived children. Humanitarian relief environments like refugee camps are grounds for nutritional problems, and social support is necessary.

Finally, the fourth topic is climate change. Global warming may decrease the harvest of crops, and we have to consider this future problem strongly. The selection of animal protein to plant protein foods may play a supportive and critical role.

By considering the roles of nutrition, physical activity, urban planning, food systems, agriculture, climate change, economics, governance and politics, law, business, marketing, and communication, we have to prepare recommendations for coordinated approaches and a logical framework for accountability in 2022.

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