

OUR TAIWAN Taiwan's National Health Insurance: Providing Security

By Staff Our Taiwan writers Jenny Lin, Ruby Huang and Annie Hsu

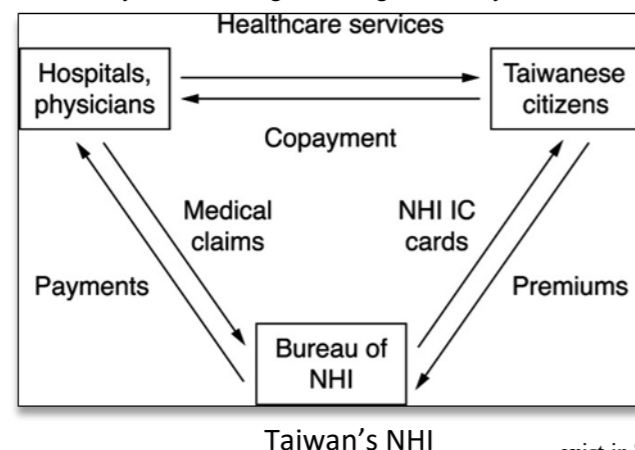
Taiwan National Health Insurance (NHI), is a compulsory insurance policy, implemented in 1995. All Taiwanese citizens are eligible, and most permanent residents can also take part. After joining National Health Insurance, one receives a health insurance card. When you see a doctor, you need to bring the card and pay a reduced fee to receive treatment.

Before the introduction of the NHI, there were many different insurance schemes covering around 57% of the population in Taiwan. NHI aimed to improve the efficiency of the system, and introduce social justice by increasing healthcare coverage. This has been achieved, with close to 100% of the population now covered by health care.

NHI policies have benefits and flaws, but in sum Taiwanese medical care is better than most countries.

Some of the strengths of NHI include good accessibility. The NHI has a very high approval rate among Taiwanese people. Taiwanese citizens can see any doctor without a referral. They may also go to any level of hospital directly, as they wish. As well, comprehensive coverage allows almost all services provided by a health system, from dental care to parturition, from Western medicine to traditional Chinese medicine, from preventive services to elderly home care. Short waiting times mean

there is generally no waiting list and patients can normally see any specialist they wish during working hours. The only exception is when the physician whom the patient wants to see is very popular, there may be a wait for an appointment. Low costs are appreciated by everyone, and owing to the single insurer sys-



tem, Taiwan's NHI has one of the lowest administrative costs in the world, typically under 2% of total healthcare spending. Every year, the Department of Health negotiates with physicians and hospitals to set the budget, and this helps keep the cost lower. High coverage rates mean that all citizens in Taiwan join NHI except for prisoners or people who have moved out of Taiwan. Taiwanese citizens living overseas who maintain the residence registration in Taiwan are also covered by NHI and are required to pay the premium. Finally, a nationwide research databank has NHI utilizing "big data" techniques, and applies this to disease prevention and research. The National

Health Research Institutes keeps a complete database for research purposes.

Some of the drawbacks of NHI include the quality of outpatient visits. Most visits to doctors are relatively short and this can result in poor patient-physician rapport and inability to deal with complex problems. As well, a weak referral system means that one consequence of easy accessibility is that the 'gatekeeper' role of family doctors is relatively weak in Taiwan. Having fewer gatekeeper means there is no check on whether Taiwanese use specialty healthcare suitably. Financial problems include that as in the health systems of many countries, financial problems exist in Taiwan. Currently, the Taiwanese NHI does not take in enough money from premium payments to cover healthcare provided by hospitals and other healthcare personnel.

All things considered, and considering the advantages and disadvantages of NHI, there are many details, problems and suggestions needed to improve the system. The health of the people is the foundation of a country. The government should take in more opinions from all sides, and through discussion and communication with the medical profession achieve the ideal of excellent, inexpensive medical service. Some information and art from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>.

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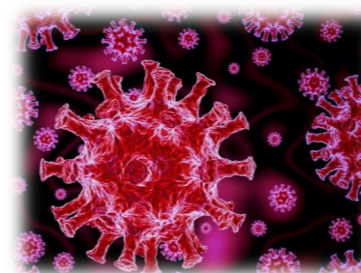
NTU Bulletin

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"Fly to Nowhere!"—The air industry reacts to COVID

By staff writer Lisa Wen

COVID-19...



...stay safe for Christmas!

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The coronavirus hit the global economy very hard, not least the tourism and airline industries. Many flights have been cancelled due to lockdown restrictions, and travelers have had to reroute and cancel many flights. International travel has plunged in Asia and worldwide.

EVA Airways, one of the largest carriers in Taiwan, is cooperating with the travel experience company Mobius on a special project called "Fly to nowhere!" In this program, passengers buy tickets for flights that land in the same place they departed from. In doing this, airlines say they are taking measures to ensure a safe environment when passengers board and disembark, and they strongly emphasize wearing masks and social distancing. The

program has allowed thousands of Taiwanese passengers to enjoy flying and tourism again.

"So many of our frequent fliers are used to being on planes every other week and telling us they miss the experience of flying as much as the destinations themselves."



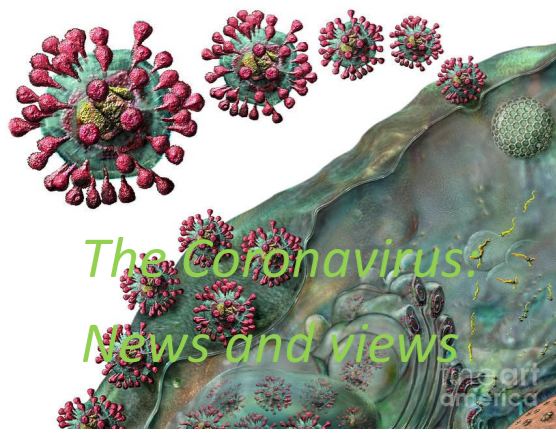
said Alan Joyce, the CEO of Qantas Airlines

However, many critics say such a program has problems. These people say that air travel of any kind can cause unnecessary carbon emissions. The aviation sector currently accounts for about 2% of global emissions and it is one of the fastest-

growing polluters. According to projections from researchers at Manchester Metropolitan University, emissions from the sector could double by 2050 even if planes become substantially more fuel-efficient and airlines save additional carbon by optimizing their operations.

Despite the ideal, Taiwan has boasted success with fights during the coronavirus epidemic. As of November, 26 2020 there are 623 coronavirus cases and 7 deaths in Taiwan, and the nation has been recognized globally for its efforts to combat the disease. This is one reason why so many industries in Taiwan have found it possible to launch new programs to enable them to survive, like this air plan. Art by Bing images.

NTU Bulletin



COVID's impact on animals



By staff writer Teresa Yu

The COVID-19 pandemic outbreak has had a huge impact on daily human life worldwide, including curfews, social distancing, lockdowns, and mandatory face masks. The virus has also had an impact on domestic and wild creatures. These animals have been infected, but they are not suspected of passing the disease to humans. It is known that the coronavirus spreads primarily from person to person through respiratory droplets spread by coughing, sneezing, and talking. Let's look at animals and COVID.

Tigers—the first animal infected by COVID-19. In April, Nadia, a four-year-old tiger at New York's Bronx Zoo, became the first non-domesticated animal in the world reported to be infected with coronavirus. Ultimately, eight big cats at the Bronx Zoo tested positive for COVID-19. The cats contracted the virus from a caretaker who was asymptotically infected with the virus according to a statement from the zoo.

Domestic Cats—domestic cats are known to be susceptible to coronaviruses, and several pet cats around the world have tested positive with COVID-19. There are two contagion channels that are suspected in causing this. The first is the that owners might be infected with the virus and passed it on to the cats. The second one is that the animals were infected in an open area where stray cats might have been ill with the virus.

Dogs—in June a German shepherd, Buddy, became the first dog in the U.S. to test positive with the virus, and he died when he was euthanized a few months later. After this, more and more cases involving dogs being infected were reported. These cases have given rise to the question of whether animals with underlying conditions, such as cancer, may be more likely to test positive.

Farm mink—on several fur farms in the Netherlands, Spain, Denmark, and the U.S., minks tested positive for the coronavirus. The infection in farmed mink has been characterized by respiratory disease and an in-

crease in deaths. Because some workers on mink farms had COVID-19, it is likely that infected farm workers were the initial source of the infections. In response, hundreds of thousands of minks in affected farms were culled. The Netherlands has now permanently closed its mink farm industry.

Lions—three lions in the Bronx Zoo, New York, tested positive. Veterinary labs at Cornell University and a federal disease lab tested them through their fecal samples. The three lions are all believed to have been infected by an asymptomatic zoo worker who has since recovered.

As the pandemic rages, we need to consider not only human casualties, but also animals. While we are wearing face masks and using sanitizers to protect ourselves, it may also be important for us to think about methods to prevent animals from becoming infected. Animals are alive, just as we are, and for many people animals are their best friends. Art by Stock Photos.



Taipei artist Lai Chih-Sheng has opened his "Closer" project at the Taipei Fine Arts Museum Space C (25 June 2020–6 June 2021). The show consists of a site-specific installations that emphasize spatial qualities.

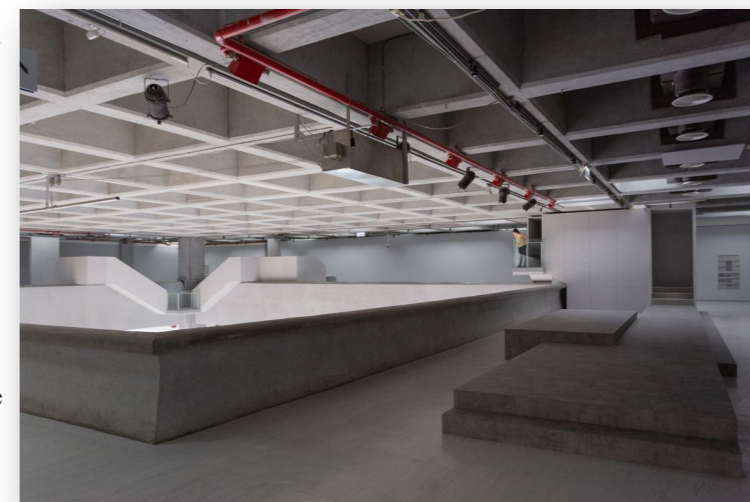
Dedicated to experimental projects, Space C offers panoramic views of the museum's lobby. Lai makes use of this architecture in his constructions, with runways, the lines of sight of which are complemented by lookout



points that protrude out over the lobby, one of them high enough to allow viewers to reach up to the museum's ceiling.

Lai Chih-Sheng was once a member of the conceptual art group National Oxygen. As a member of National Oxygen, Lai staged early interventions in abandoned buildings and structures around Taipei in the 1990s, including a factory in which he stacked 100 bricks up to the ceiling. His early work was in this way seen in disused struc-

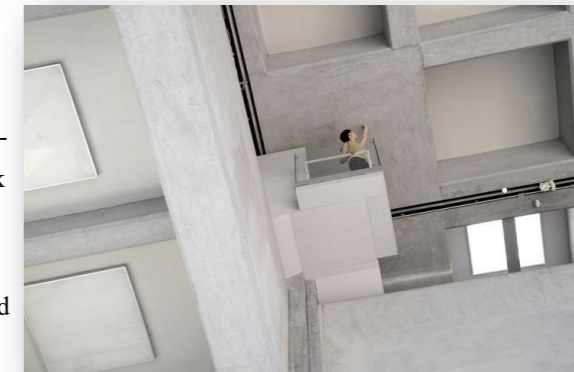
tures around the, with reference to the transformation of sites from used to unused areas. Building on the tradition of self-reflexivity seen in conceptual art, Lai's work responded to the reliance on display systems, and turned to self-reference as an



board to create new admixtures. The instal-

Lai Chih-Sheng's "Closer:" Zone, space, connectivity and sense/sensuality

Staff Art Walk writers: Penny Liu with David Pendery



exploration of minute perceptions.

This show employs steel H-beams that are linked with the museum's pillars, allowing them to be suspended over the museum's lobby. Comprising a net load of 500 kilograms per square meter, this structure required great effort to install.

"Closer" engages with the site's greyscale color scheme, making use of materials such as wood, fiber, and

Space C, and visitors might not even notice this connection. But despite its stringent appearance, carpeted corridors encourage tactile engagement. The carpet, Lai says, provides people with a sense of security, despite the confus-

ing heights people find themselves in while viewing the artwork.

A fine interaction of precariousness and stability defines Lai's work, which engages with relationships between the body and space, emphasizing the actualized sensory experience of site.

Lai's intervention at Taipei Fine Arts Museum, redirecting an audience's attention in space, and focusing on sense and sight, suggests his long interest in reflexivity, perception and spatial orientation. When architect Kao Er-Pan designed this building in 1978,

he disallowed the use of classical Chinese architectural qualities that were popular at that time. Instead, Kao chose to submit a modern design, embedded with a spirit of "art for art's sake," which only 'true' art, is divorced from any didactic, moral, political or utilitarian function. Closer invokes this spirit by creating the conditions in which viewers contemplate presence, and role of sensory awareness. Art and some data from laichihsheng.com, Penny Liu, and ocula.com.