

Taiwanese Health and Welfare Delegation Visit North Carolina

September 1, 2017

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On August 30th, 15 members of the Taiwan Health and Welfare Delegation visited Phoenix Assisted Care in Cary, NC (a NCALTCF member) to learn how assisted living services are provided here in the United States. Like many countries, Taiwan's population is aging at a fast rate and will probably "meet the criteria for an "aged society" in 2018 when 14.5 percent of the population is age 65 or over, and a "super-aged society" in 2026 when that figure reaches 20.6 percent." (http://english.ey.gov.tw/News_Hot_Topic.aspx?n=FE8C5966F81D8273&sms=BBB420E471DAF6C0)

It is expected that the rapid growth of the aging segment of the population will create a greater need for long term care and home and community based services, which is expected to place a heavier burden on families. As a result, Taiwan is in the process of implementing a "10-year Long Term Care 2.0" plan, which will focus on aging in place. However, since there will most likely be a shortage of caregivers, Taiwan is also weighing options for providing residential care for its aging population. Currently, Taiwan primarily offers institutional care for elderly citizens requiring care for memory disorders or who are in a medically fragile state; however, in order to look at more options to promote home and community based services, the Taiwanese government sent its representatives to North Carolina to look at how publicly funded services (Medicaid) are used for caring for elderly individuals requiring a residential setting due to their physical or mental condition.

The NC Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Health Service Regulation was asked by the Taiwanese government to recommend an assisted living facility to visit while in North Carolina and they recommended Phoenix Assisted Care. Owner Kenny Burrow was honored to host Taiwanese officials as he and his staff explained how resident care was paid for with State/County Special Assistance as well as Medicaid Personal Care Services funds. After explaining the payment and reimbursement system, Taiwanese officials were provided a tour of the facility including its special care unit for residents with memory disorders. The Taiwanese were very appreciative and grateful for the time and resources Kenny and his staff put forth to help them better understand the concept of residential care.