



The Alliance for Healthy Cities

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Report

Alliance for Healthy Cities gives awards to 45 cities and organizations for their efforts in the Healthy Cities movement

Sydney, Australia – September 1, 2026 --- The Alliance for Healthy Cities has worked with its member cities and organizations to advocate the “Healthy Cities” approach and has extended projects and programs for planning, implementations and evaluation for the improvement of health and quality of life of the people in cities.

AFHC Awards for Healthy Cities recognize the diversity of practices of Healthy Cities, the progress of respective Healthy Cities initiatives based on process evaluation, and creativity of work in Healthy Cities.

On September 1, 2026, during the 11th Global Conference of the Alliance for Healthy Cities, hosted by the University of New South Wales and Healthy Cities Australia, Professor Keiko Nakamura (Professor Emeritus of the Institute of Science Tokyo and Head of Secretariat of the Alliance for Healthy Cities) announced the award winners in two categories: Progress and Creative Developments. Cr. Melinda Lawton, Chair of the Steering Committee of the Alliance for Healthy Cities, presented the certificates to awardees.

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Awards for Progress of Healthy Cities

The approach of “Healthy City Programme” (HCP) is based on philosophy with assumption that enhancement in health occurs (1) through improvements in certain social, cultural and economic conditions with changes in human attitudes; (2) through initiatives in improvement of personal and environmental health; and (3) when health is regarded as an integral part of development in the community. The Ottawa Charter for Health provided the strategic framework defining health promotion as “the process of enabling people to take control over, and to improve their health”. Therefore, a Healthy City is not necessarily one that has achieved a particular level of health but is conscious of health and is striving to *improve* it. HCP and healthy setting literature states that when such long-term development projects are evaluated during the first few years, the focus should be on process rather than outcomes because improvement in health status is only likely to change in the longer term. The following awards were given with recognition of the city’s progress on their reports. This year, progress awards were given to 16 cities, and recognition in developing Healthy City was given to 2 cities.

Certificate of Recognition in developing Healthy City is presented to cities that have demonstrated foundational progress in initiating and advancing their Healthy City programmes. The award was given to Izumisano City, Japan and Tongyeong City, Korea.

Award for Progress of Healthy Cities- Healthy City with Good Infrastructure is presented to cities that have demonstrated initiatives in using multiple settings to promote population health with strategic planning. Five cities were recognized: Zhangjiagang City, China; Chungju City, Korea; Eunpyeong-gu, Seoul, Korea; Gimhae City, Korea; and Siheung City, Korea.

Award for Progress of Healthy Cities- Healthy City with Good Dynamic is presented to cities that successfully demonstrated policies that placed the infrastructure of a Healthy City to push the Healthy City movement forward. This time, the award was given to six cities: Macao SAR, China; Bucheon City, Korea; Dong-gu, Jeonnam-Gwangju Special Metropolitan City, Korea; Goyang City, Korea; Jinju City, Korea; and Nowon-gu, Seoul, Korea.

Award for Progress of Healthy Cities- Healthy City with Strong Action is presented to cities that have active participation from professional groups such as academic and private sectors for advanced development of a Healthy City, aiming to become an integral part of city planning and development. The award was given to two cities: Suzhou City, China and Obu City, Japan.

Award for Progress of Healthy Cities- Healthy City with Expert is given to cities with long-standing good track records in the development of a Healthy City. Awardees are selected from the cities that had already received an “AFHC Award for Healthy City with Outstanding Performance” or “AFHC Award for Healthy City with Strong Action”. When demonstration of further continuing progress with good evidence in that city, and contribution to promote Healthy Cities in the region and beyond are confirmed, this special award is presented.

This year, this award was given to three cities: Owariasahi City, Japan; Gangdong-gu, Seoul, Korea; and Kuching City, Malaysia. Owariasahi City’s continuous excellency to sustain strong policy actions to penetrate the spirit of Healthy City into everyday life has led to continuing strong action. Gangdong-gu’s continuous excellency to sustain the Healthy City movement as an exemplar for Healthy City has led to continuing strong action. Kuching City’s sustainable mechanism for Healthy Cities with good dynamic contributed to a long-standing good records in development of a Healthy City.

Awards for Creative Developments in Healthy Cities

There are many creative developments and good practices by Healthy Cities worldwide and this award recognizes creative developments in Healthy Cities that arise from diverse socio-cultural, environments and development backgrounds. The reports on the following themes were evaluated for selection of awardees: (1) Public Spaces for Health and Well-Being; (2) Universal Health Coverage in Cities; (3) Remedy for Loneliness in Cities; (4) Evaluation of Long-term Commitment of a Healthy City; (5) Nature-based Solutions for Planetary/ One Health in Cities; and (6) Increasing Resilience to Health Emergencies in Cities. This year, 27 cities and organizations received this award in those six areas.

Award for Creative Developments in Healthy Cities – Public Spaces for Health and Well-Being was given to cities and organizations that demonstrated exemplary efforts in creating, enhancing, and utilizing public spaces to promote health, social connection, environmental quality, and overall well-being in their communities.

There are seven awardees: Kunshan City, China for “Holistic Regional Coordination,

Jointly Building Healthy Rural Homelands”; Owariasahi City, Japan for “Creating ‘Public Spaces Filled with Smiles’ – Utilizing Local Resources through the Asahi-iro Project”; Dong-gu, Jeonnam-gwangju Special Metropolitan City for “Dong-gu Maeul Sarangchae: A Community Health Platform for a City People Choose to Stay In and Neighborhoods That Thrive”; Gangdong-gu, Seoul, Korea for “Creating a Health Support Environment by Integrating Physical and Digital Public Spaces”; Jinju City, Korea for “From Eyesores to Public Spaces for Health and Well-being: Realizing Health Equity and Revitalizing the Historic Downtown”; Health Promotion Board Singapore for “Punggol Digital District”; and Tainan Healthy City Association for “Saving Lives First: Smart Mobility for Emergency Vehicle Priority in Tainan City”.

Award for Creative Developments in Healthy Cities – Universal Health Coverage in Cities was given to cities ensures all residents access quality health services—from prevention to palliative care—without financial hardship.

There are five awardees: Macao SAR, China for “The Story Behind the Numbers: How Macao Achieves Effective Hypertension Management with Limited Resources (A City Quality Management Program Centered on WHO Universal Health Coverage (UHC))”; Gimhae City, Korea for “Leaving No One Behind: Institutionalizing Health Equity through Health Literacy in Gimhae City”; North District Healthy City Promotion Association, Tainan for “Living is Care: Reimagining Dementia-Friendly Cities through Community and Culture in Tainan City”; Taichung Healthy City Promotion Association for “Bridging the Last Mile of Universal Health Coverage: Taichung City Heping District Integrated Remote Healthcare Project Based on the Six UHC Building Blocks”; and Yunlin County, Zinnia Hope Family Association for “Boosting Physical Vitality, Preserving Metabolic Health: Yunlin’s Dual-Engine Strategy for Universal Health Coverage”.

Award for Creative Developments in Healthy Cities – Remedy for Loneliness in Cities was presented to cities/organizations that have implemented innovative strategies to strengthen social connection, reduce isolation, and build supportive community environments for residents across diverse urban settings.

This award was won by five cities and organizations: Dong-gu, Jeonnam-Gwangju Special Metropolitan City, Korea for “Dong-gu, Gwangju Responds to Loneliness: Through Data, Technology, and Human Connection”; Gimhae City, Korea for “Building Social Connectedness in an Ageing City: The Gimhae Model for Preventing Social Isolation and Loneliness”; Siheung City, Korea for “SHIELD (Social & Health Inclusive Empathy & Loneliness Defense) Siheung”; Chiayi City Healthy City Promotion Association for “Building Social Connection and Health Equity through Women’s Social Enterprise: A Healthy Governance Model for Remedying Urban Loneliness in Chiayi City”; and Zhongshan Health Promotion Association for “Enabling Older Adults to Continue to Be Needed: A Community Mutual-Support Model for Reducing Urban Loneliness Risk through Role Transformation among Older Volunteers – A Case of Zhongshan District, Taipei City”.

Award for Creative Developments in Healthy Cities – Evaluation of Long-term Commitment of a Healthy City was presented to cities and organizations that have demonstrated sustained dedication to advancing Healthy City development over many years, supported by evidence-based progress, institutional continuity, and contributions to regional and international Healthy Cities networks.

There are four awardees. Owariasahi City, Japan for “A Sustainable Healthy City Guided by 20 Years of Evaluation and Improvement - Implementing Creative Measures Through Integration with Top-Level Plans and Passing Them on to the Next Generation –”; Korea

Health Promotion Institute (KHEPI) for “Building a National Healthy City Support System: KHEPI's Fifteen-Year Commitment in Korea”; New Taipei Healthy City Promotion Association for “Health Coin Governance Model (HCG Model): Transforming Healthy Behaviors into Healthy City Governance”; and Taipei Healthy City Promotion Association for “Beyond Two Decades: An Innovative Evaluation Model for Taipei's Long-Term Healthy City Commitment”.

Award for Creative Developments in Healthy Cities – Nature-based Solutions for Planetary/ One Health in Cities was presented to cities and organizations that have advanced innovative, ecosystem-based approaches to improving urban health, environmental sustainability, and community resilience.

There are four award-winners: Taicang City, China for “Taicang's One Health Approach to Water, Biodiversity and Climate Resilience”; Changwon City, Korea for “Restored Forests, Revived Rivers, and Healthier Citizens: Changwon's Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) and One Health Governance”; North District Healthy City Promotion Association, Tainan for “Promoting Planetary Health and Urban Resilience in Coastal Areas through Nature-based Solutions: A Case Study of the Ciwan Land Readjustment Project in Tainan, Taiwan”; and Shilin Health Promotion Association for “Awakening from a Silent Spring: Building Shilin into an Equitable and Healthy City Where Mountains, Rivers, and People Thrive Together”.

Award for Creative Developments in Healthy Cities – Increasing Resilience to Health Emergencies in Cities was presented to cities and organizations that have strengthened their capacity to prepare for, respond to, and recover from diverse health emergencies, with respecting equity. This award was won by Changwon City, Korea for “From Health Risk Detection to Recovery: Changwon's Health Resilience Platform”; and Tainan Healthy City Association for “From Outbreak Response to Climate-Resilient Dengue Governance: Tainan's Integrated Smart Surveillance, Community Mobilization and Equity-Focused Preparedness Model”.

Professor Albert Lee, Chair of the Award Committee of the AFHC, from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and anonymous reviewers were commended for their dedicated and impartial evaluations, which ensured the integrity of this year's awards. The AFHC Award Ceremony was held at Sir John Clancy Auditorium, University of New South Wales, Sydney. More than 300 delegates from all over the world, along with WHO professionals, honored the awardees.

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