

Medical Faculty News



Faculty of Medicine, The University of Hong Kong

January 1997

Volume 1 Issue 4

A quarterly update to keep alumni and friends in touch, and up to date.

FACULTY RESEARCH WEEKEND



Staff and students viewing the poster exhibition at Wei Lun Hall During the Faculty Research Weekend

The Faculty Research Weekend was held from 23-24th November, 1996. The specific aims were to gather and allow staff members to share their experiences on their on-going research projects, so that more collaborations in the future could be achieved.

The Opening Ceremony was officiated by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Y.C. Cheng and was followed by poster sessions presented by postgraduate students and oral sessions delivered by staff members. Professor Sir David Todd from our Faculty and Professor Joseph Lee, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, also talked about the research directions of the two medical schools in Hong Kong. The Faculty Research Weekend concluded with the presentation of the best poster awards to Ph.D and MPhil students. The Dean's Awards were also presented to Mrs. Ivy Wu and Dr. Judith Mackay for their contributions to the health and medical aspects of the Hong Kong Community. This was followed by a dinner held in Loke Yew Hall at which the Secretary for Education and Manpower, Mr. Joseph Wong was invited as the guest of honour.



Dr K H Lee, Dr John Mackay and Dr Judith Mackay at the poster awards ceremony.



The best poster were awarded to (from left): Mr Lai Chun Hong, Miss Rainbow Kwan, Mr Richard Pang and Mr Sheng Jian Zhang

WHAT'S INSIDE...

- JUPAS Open Day (pg 2)
- Alumni news (pg 3)
- Developments (pg 4)
- Recent Meetings (pg 6)

DEANS MESSAGE

Medical technology has made great advances in the recent fifty years and a doctor now possesses much more armamentaria in his treatment of diseases. Yet, there seems to be more complaints and litigations brought against the medical profession nowadays. The family physician practising half a century ago, on the other hand, seemed to command much better respect, especially at times when they could offer nothing much to their patients or relatives except tender loving care. This humanitarian aspect was not explicitly written in our Mission Statement which only refers to the "...medical and health sciences". Some alumni have suggested that we should add the word "art" to highlight "the art and science of medicine and health". Since next year is the 110th anniversary of our medical school, it is also an opportunity for us to re-write our Mission Statement. I would like to receive comments from all of you.

ANNUAL JUPAS OPEN DAY...

The yearly University of Hong Kong open day for prospective students was held on the 19th October this year and attracted over 2,500 visitors to the faculty.

The aim was to introduce the different departments in the faculty to the secondary school students who might be thinking of medicine or nursing as a future career.

The exhibition featured video shows and poster displays from each of the departments highlighting the activities taking place in the Medical Faculty and members of staff were at hand to answer questions. This gave opportunities for the prospective students to find out more about the courses and the individual subjects that they might want to study.

Guided tours were laid out to show the students around a few of the departments. The pre-clinical Departments of Anatomy, Biochemistry, Pharmacology and Physiology



Interested visitors at the opening day

combined to present some of their research activities with various demonstrations. The Department of Psychiatry allowed the visitors a glimpse into their daily work demonstrating sleep assessment and brain mapping. The Department of Obstetric and Gynaecology opened their laboratory of assisted fertilization to the visitors whilst the Department of Nursing Studies staged demonstrations of nursing skills and health assessment methods.

Next year 1997, being the 110 anniversary of the medical faculty, will have special sentiment to all of us. The future of the faculty depends on this group of students who will be the doctors and nurses of the future. The enthusiasm and interests shown by the bright young students during this visit are an assurance that the Medical Faculty has a prosperous future.

OUR VIEWS...

The aims of this newsletter are to improve the awareness of the activities of members of the Faculty of Medicine, especially the collaborations between departments, and to inform outside bodies or individuals about current activities of the Faculty. This newsletter will be published 4 times a year and sent free to all registered medical practitioners in Hong Kong. It will also be sent to overseas medical schools and recent graduates of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Hong Kong. If you have photographs of your time in the Medical Faculty, news or updates on past graduates, please forward all correspondence to The Editor, Medical Faculty

News, Faculty of Medicine, 7 Sassoon Road, Pok Fu Lam, Hong Kong. Fax enquiries to the Faculty of Medicine (852)-28559742, E-mail: dmwliu@hkucc.hku.hk

Editorial Board:

Dr J M Nicholls (Editor)
Prof C H Cho
Dr ETFHo
Dr H P Sheng
Dr C M Wong

ALUMNI NEWS ...

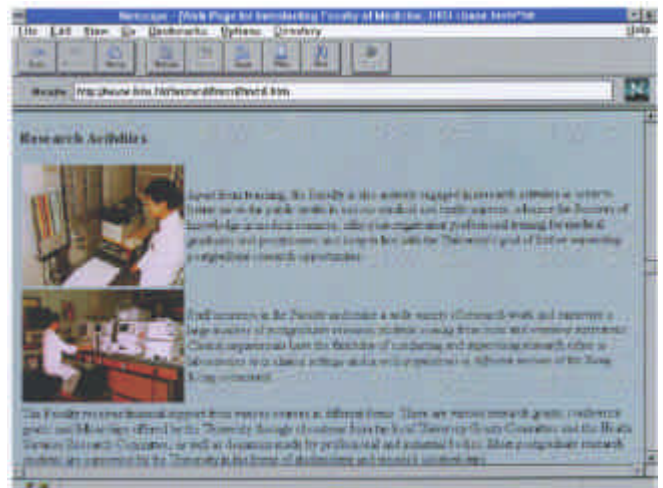
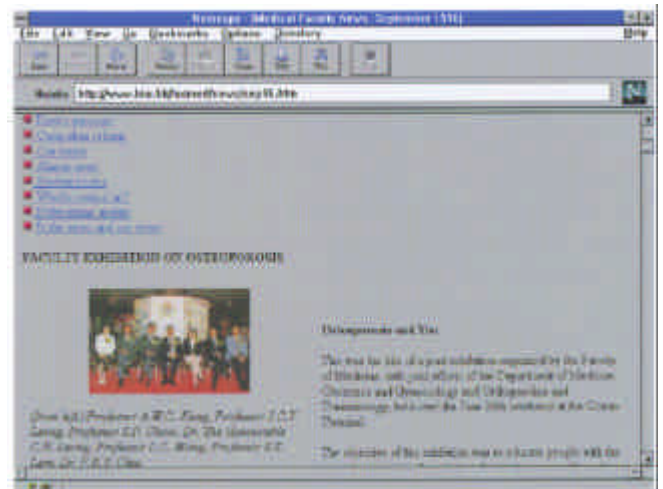


PROFESSOR H.K. MA., since retiring, she continues to dedicate her time to voluntary work in promoting women's health and family planning both locally and abroad. She continues to serve as a member of the International Medical Advisory Panel of the International Planned Parenthood Federation. She was elected the Secretary General of the International Federation of Gynaecology and Obstetrics (FIGO) and therefore is responsible for supervising the work of the FIGO Secretariat located in London. In her leisure time, she tries to set up her London home, to improve her skill as a chef, and to catch up on reading. Her friends have established a Foundation in her name, the mission of which is "to improve the social, medical and educational welfare of women and to promote high standard for their care in Hong Kong". She helps as a volunteer and advisor to the Foundation.



PROFESSOR LAWRENCE CHAN M.D., a 1966 HKU graduate, was recently in Hong Kong to deliver an Inaugural Lecture for the Centre for Cellular Biology. Since leaving Hong Kong he worked in Canada briefly before joining Washington University where he received internal medicine training. In 1973 he came to Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas where he has a busy academic life centred around research, education and patient care. He is currently a Professor of the Departments of Cell Biology and Medicine as well as Director of the Centre for Molecular Medicine.

NETWORKING UPDATE...



The response from readers to medical web sites resulted in too many for one page and as a result these will be incorporated into the Faculty's new web page. In view of the trend for electronic access the Faculty has recently appointed an Assistant Computer Officer, Mr. Albert Au, who will be setting up web sites and e-mail contacts for staff and alumni to have easy access to. Already we have our own web page which has previous issues of Medical Faculty News incorporated into it. In the future we hope to list all our alumni into our web page and give details of their contacts. If you are one of our alumni, either in Hong Kong or overseas who wish to be listed, please let us know!

DEVELOPMENTS...



Professor Huang Jie-Fu, President of Sun Yat-Sen University of Medical Sciences and Professor S P Chou.

Sun Yat-Sen University Agreement

An agreement for Exchange of Academic Staff and Students was signed on September 9, 1996, between The Sun Yat-Sen University of Medical Sciences (SUMS) and our Faculty in order to strengthen the academic interaction between Hong Kong and China. This agreement provides an opportunity for staff members and postgraduate students of SUMS to conduct their research and clinical training at HKU for a period of up to one year.

Academic Collaboration with the University of British Columbia

In early January, an agreement for Academic Collaboration was signed between the Faculty of Medicine, the University of Hong Kong and the Faculty of Medicine, the University of British Columbia (UBC). The purpose of this agreement was to establish a lasting partnership between the two institutions in the fields of medical education, research and clinical care. The Faculty has identified a number of areas for possible research collaboration.

A meeting was recently held where presentations by the specialty groups for partnership were heard and the criteria for determining which group would be supported were laid down. It was recommended that the two fields of collaborative researches to be supported initially would be Cardiovascular Science and Medicine, and Neuroscience. It was also recommended that Cancer and related researches should receive Faculty support and commence in the near future. Teleconferencing, Molecular Medicine and Molecular genetics would be incorporated, where appropriate, into these fields of collaborative researches.



The successful liver transplant team (from left); Dr C I Lai, Dr Ronald Lo, recipient, donor, Professor S T Fan, Dr C M Lo

Department of surgery leads the world in successful right lobe liver transplants

Right lobe liver transplants are more difficult to perform than left lobe due to the anatomy and blood supply of the right lobe. The operation has been performed in other countries without success. However, in what has been described as a world first, Professor S.T. Fan from the Department of Surgery led his team in performing two living-related right lobe liver transplants from relatives into recipients with acute liver failure. Both patients have been discharged and are recovering well.

MORE DEVELOPMENTS...

Melatonin Research

Melatonin has been boldly described by some to be the hottest pill of the coming decade. However, its mechanisms and sites of action await to be fully established. Recent studies by Prof. S.F. Pang, Dr. A.M.S. Poon and Dr. S.Y.W. Shui of the Department of Physiology and coworkers in other institutions have, however, suggested direct melatonin actions on peripheral tissues, rather than on the brain and the pituitary; these include the heart, lungs, blood vessels, immune tissues, kidneys, liver, etc.

The mechanisms of melatonin action on peripheral

tissues remain unclear, but it has been hypothesized that there are different melatonin receptor subtypes in different tissues and that these receptor subtypes are functionally different. Further studies on the signal transduction pathway of native and recombinant receptor proteins will provide important information on the physiological functions of melatonin receptors in peripheral tissues.

These findings will contribute to the clarification of mechanisms and sites of melatonin actions; provide the scientific basis for the development of tissuespecific melatonin analogs; and identify possible agricultural and clinical applications of melatonin and its analogs in the future.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SMOKING

Professor T.H. Lam from the Department of Community Medicine was invited as a keynote speaker in the Chinese First National Conference of Occupational Health Surveillance which was held in October, 1996 in Kunming, China. The paper he presented "The methodological issues in using occupational health surveillance in epidemiological research" was derived from his successful experience, which started 10 years ago, in collaboration with Dr. Jiang Chao-Qiang, Director of the Guangzhou Occupational Diseases Prevention and Treatment Centre. In the keynote address, Professor Lam highlighted the great potentials of using occupational health surveillance information for different types of epidemiological studies and the importance for studying both occupational exposures and



Professor Lam Tai-Hing (5th from left) and Dr. Jiang Chao-Qiang (4th from left) with other organizing committee members of the Chinese First National Conference of Occupational Health Surveillance

life-style factors, particularly smoking. At the end, he proposed a strategy for future research development.

MASTER OF MEDICAL SCIENCES

The course, organised by the Faculty of Medicine through its School of Postgraduate Medical Education and Training, commenced in 1995/96 with 3 full-time and 4 part-time Master of Medical Sciences (M.Med.Sc.) students



Participants, many from the faculty, attended the orientation session for the Master of Medical Sciences

enrolling in the programme. This year the number has substantially increased to 3 fulltime and 20 part-time candidates. In addition, there are 7 special students who are taking selected modules from specialised fields of study or certain Core Modules, and 49 physicians from the Hospital Authority who are reading either Numerical Methods or Epidemiology and Critical Appraisal Core Modules, as are 19 postgraduate students from the Dental Faculty. The Core Modules are also offered to the 1st-year postgraduate students in the Medical Faculty to enhance their basic research and analytical skills.

The aims of the M.Med.Sc. course are to provide structured training in the basic medical and clinical disciplines to enable postgraduates in Hong Kong and countries in the Asia Pacific Region to embark on specialist studies.

In the M.Med.Sc. programme each student has to take 4 out of 8 core modules, ten specialized modules and writes a dissertation on a research project in the Department offering the specialized module; a minimum of 120 hours is devoted to the research project.

RECENT MEETINGS...

3rd ANNUAL HKICC and 7th EBV MEETING

The Hong Kong Convention Centre saw the meeting together of scientists and clinicians for the 3rd Hong Kong International Cancer Congress, a yearly meeting in which the Faculty of Medicine plays a major role. This year was unique in that the Congress was held together with the 7th International Meeting for Research into Epstein-Barr Virus and Associated Diseases. As a result there was a great emphasis in the congress on two EBV associated diseases which are common in Hong Kong nasopharyngeal carcinoma as well as certain types of malignant lymphoma. After a combined first day the two meetings met in different lecture theatres but there was still ample opportunity for clinicians to discuss with basic scientists on recent developments in Epstein-Barr virus biology and therapeutic measures that are available for the treatment of various malignancies. Professor JHC Ho was invited by the EBV Association to give the Henle Lecture and Professor Faith Ho from the Department of



Prof Thomas Tursz, President of EBV Association and Prof GB Ong, President of HKICC, dotting the eyes of the lion.

Pathology delivered the HKICC lecture. Work is already underway on the 4th HKICC which will be held in conjunction with the 14th Asian Pacific Cancer Congress, 16-19th November, 1997.

FIRST CHINA-HK NURSING CONFERENCE

The Department of Nursing Studies is the youngest Department in the Faculty but already has played a large part in the First China-HK Nursing Education Conference which was held at Princess Margaret Hospital in early September. This conference was the first of its kind in the Asian region and provided an important opportunity for mutual enrichment and collaboration among institutions in the region. Keynote speakers from Shanghai, Beijing and Hong Kong addressed themes in the future direction of nursing education, curriculum innovation and staff development. Above all, the conference allowed a greater understanding of the development of nursing education in the Chinese communities within the region.



Ms Shirley Wong (Department Of Nursing, Chinese University of Hone Hong), Professor Patricia Sullivan (Department of Nursing Studies, University of Hong Kong) and Ms Sally Chan (Queen Elizabeth Hospital) at the China-HK nursing conference

OSTEOPOROSIS WEEKEND

Osteoporosis is one of the selected areas for collaborative research between the Faculty and Columbia University, USA, thanks to a generous grant made possible by Dr and Mrs Clyde Wu. Symposia on osteoporosis were held sequentially at Peking Union Medical College Hospital, Shanghai Second Medical University and then in Hong Kong. The two symposia in Hong Kong were attended by a total of 620 people. Experts from Columbia University, Prof. John Bilezikian and Ethel Siris discussed the pathogenesis, and local data collected by Faculty members from the Departments of Medicine, Obstetrics & Gynaecology and Orthopaedics & Traumatology were presented.



Major speakers at the Symposium on Osteoporosis were Professor Annie Kung, Professor Ethel Siris and Professor John Bilezikian