

Editorial

Emergency medicine: now a global specialty

急症醫學：現在一個全球性的專科

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Recently, in June this year, I had an opportunity to visit our emergency medicine colleagues in Hong Kong.

Emergency medicine is very much alive and well in Hong Kong. Just as the city itself can be described in superlative terms so can the emergency medicine. The very pleasant visit disclosed an impressive array of hospitals that provide around the clock care in emergency departments.

The emergency departments are well staffed with trained emergency physicians who utilise modern facilities and equipment. Specialty training is available on United Kingdom model. Even more impressive are the strides our specialty has made in Hong Kong achieving official recognition and designation as a major medical specialty. This has been achieved on governmental and medical community levels.

I had the privilege to meet Dr. C.H. Chung, who is the First and Immediate Past President of the

Hong Kong College of Emergency Medicine and Editor-in-Chief of its Journal. This resulted in a visit to the impressive Hong Kong Academy of Medicine Building where fifteen elegant college headquarters are housed together. It became clear that emergency physicians of Hong Kong have proudly achieved their deserved recognition, albeit after a lengthy process.

I believe that in the twenty-first Century, the hallmarks of emergency medicine will be not only improvements in clinical practice and training but also its globalisation and internationalisation. The proceedings and attendance at the recent Tenth International Conference on Emergency Medicine and the meeting of the International Federation for Emergency Medicine at Cairns, Australia in June this year have demonstrated that more and more countries around the globe recognise the merit and value of and the need for emergency medicine.

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More extensive international contacts, cooperation and exchange are taking place. These need to be broadened and intensified. There are always opportunities for expanding one's horizons and new learning. Even during a very short sojourn in Hong Kong, I was able to learn while attending an impressive monthly citywide joint clinical meeting on emergency medicine. I found that Rickettsial infections are present, as well as very up-to-date management of pulmonary contagion. Quality of case presentation

and of didactic lecture was excellent. Speaking for the future of emergency medicine, it is clear that it will take on more and more issues of public health and will be more and more a safety net for health care.

Hong Kong is a great model of how a handful of inspired physicians were able to sculpt a new indispensable specialty. I know my Hong Kong colleagues will continue their efforts and be justifiably proud of their achievements.