

President's Report AGM 2015

I was elected President of the HK Institute of Allergy (HKIA) this time last year and it has been a privilege and an honour to serve the Institute in this capacity.

In giving my report, let me first thank the office bearers of HKIA and members of Council; our advisors; chairs and members of our subcommittees; Sigourney and her team at MIMS who serve as our secretariat; and not least you our members. I have appreciated your support during a very busy year without which HKIA could not have achieved so much.

In the last 12 months the profile of allergy in HK has risen significantly. There is clearly an enthusiasm and untapped energy to develop the specialty. For instance:

- Our membership has grown from 400 members to 660 with a very remarkable 230 % growth in our allied health community in HKIA. I had targeted a total membership of 800 in the first 3 years of my Presidency so we are on track to achieve this growth.
- We are honoured that Dr. Ko Wing-man, BBS JP, Secretary for Food and Health in the Government of the Hong Kong SAR has accepted our invitation to become HKIA's new Patron.
- A new training post in Immunology and Allergy at QMH/HKU has been created. It is not an exaggeration to say, I think, that if it was not for the lobbying by our allergy professional community, this may not have happened.
- Several departments in public hospitals are even considering how to provide a service for allergic patients in a more coordinated manner, but of course resources remain a significant obstacle.
- There are regular HKIA hosted allergy courses and symposia, for both doctors and allied health professionals, which are always fully subscribed.
- Learned papers on allergy, management guidelines and regular newsletters have been published and disseminated.
- We have an informative webpage.
- HKIA schemes to support members to travel overseas for short conferences or training will be introduced in 2016.
- HKIA will also be offering in 2016 small competitive pump priming grants for members to obtain preliminary data in pilot allergy studies.
- HKIA is working with government to engage the public more about urban pollution.
- Allergy news appears much more often in the media.
- Allergy related drug industries have taken a keener interest and are supportive of our educational activities.
- Another HKIA international allergy convention is planned for October 2016 in collaboration with the ACAAI, BSACI and EAACI.

To facilitate implementation of our strategy ten key subcommittees were created that included scientific programme and research; public engagement; publications; membership; education, training and fellowships; immunology; service development; allied health professionals and health promotion; finance and social programme. Each subcommittee is chaired Council members. These committees are the turbo charged engines that drive HKIA. I appreciate the invaluable enthusiastic contributions and energy from the Chairs, co-chairs and members.

It was obvious early on that with an increased and ambitious agenda it was essential that HKIA had a rigorous governance structure and a Council that could deliver.

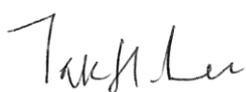
We therefore established a formal code of practice for HKIA which is now on our website.

It was also felt that our Council was too small to action the broad strategy. This is why Council is asking you to consider approving a change in HKIA's articles to increase the size of Council to 16 members instead of 11.

In addition I believe, and Council has agreed, that all robust professional societies should have turnover of new people to serve in leadership roles. It is only through the involvement of a constant stream of gifted individuals, including top young guns, that any society can be assured of its future health and creativity. Therefore Council is also asking you to consider approving at this AGM a change in our articles to allow a defined tenure for each Council member. We will explain the details later in the agenda.

These are important decisions that ensure proper governance of our Institute and ensure its continuing success. I encourage you to support the proposals.

The record in the last year bodes well for the future and we have come a long way in a short time. But there is still much to do and I look forward to working with you to grow the discipline in the year ahead.



Dr. Lee Tak-hong
President
Hong Kong Institute of Allergy