

## **President's report at AGM 2021**

### **Professor Gary Wong**

The ongoing pandemic has imposed great challenges for people around the world. In particular, various sectors of the healthcare system have been hit hard. Nevertheless, we have seen rapid advances in our understanding of the control and prevention of Covid-19. The development of vaccine against Covid-19 was extremely rapid. In less than one year since the identification of the agent causing Covid-19, several vaccines have received emergency authorization for use in different parts of the world. The local vaccination programme had a slow start but it is now slowly picking up. There is also news regarding effective oral antiviral medication coming to the market soon. Given all these advances in vaccinations and medications, we should be hopeful that the pandemic will soon be over.

Despite all the restrictions posted by the pandemic, HKIA continues to work hard to fulfil our mission in order to advance the care of patients with allergies. Shortly after the widespread use of the newly developed Covid-19 vaccinations including the use of mRNA and adenovirus vector technologies, there were reports of potential adverse effects such as severe allergic reactions and cerebral thrombotic events. These reports in the media may potentially slow down the uptake of the Covid-19 vaccination locally. Even before the vaccine was available in Hong Kong, HKIA jointly with the Hong Kong Allergy Association has hosted a Press Conference to inform the public regarding the importance of vaccination. In addition, HKIA quickly responded by forming a taskforce led by Dr. Philip Li to evaluate the scientific evidence and to develop successions of consensus statements summarizing the scientific approach in order to minimize the risk of Covid-19 vaccinations.

#### **Hong Kong Allergy Convention 2021**

The 11<sup>th</sup> HKAC, with the theme of “Novel Diagnostics and Therapy for Allergy and Asthma”. It was a two-day online event (25-26 September). With the hard work of the organizing committee, the

programme was exciting for both clinicians and researchers. It was truly an international event with speakers from supporting organisations including World Allergy Organization (WAO), American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI), British Society of Allergy & Clinical Immunology (BSACI) and European Academy of Allergy & Clinical Immunology (EAACI). In addition to topics related to Covid-19, we had many excellent sessions covering many areas of allergy. In addition, our recipients of the HKIA Research Grants including Prof. CK Wong, Dr. Agnes Leung and Dr. Christine Wai who presented their forward thinking research at the convention. Over the past two years, the online platform has matured rapidly and we may consider using a hybrid form of meeting in the future.

### **HKIA Research Grants**

In line with previous years, we have attracted many applications this year. I would like to thank the hard work of the Grant Application Committee members, Dr. Christopher Lai, Dr. Alice Ho, and Dr. Alson Chan in assessing the applications. The committee has selected three projects for support. The recipients are Dr. Jaime SOU DA ROSA DUQUE, Dr. Noelle NGAI, and Prof. TF LEUNG. We look forward to their exciting findings in our future meetings.

### **HKIA Award**

I am glad to inform you that we will be presenting various HKIA awards including the President's Medal, Research Excellence, Outstanding Contributions, and Lifetime Distinguished Service. The announcement will be made during our AGM.

### **Other Educational Activities**

HKIA has co-hosted several important CME activities. These include the joint event with Society for Innovative Healthcare on the first Covid vaccine symposium in Hong Kong, "Turning the Tide on the Pandemic- Emerging Vaccines" on 23 Jan 2021. We also hosted the RACE#2 supported by Sanofi, with Prof. Brian Lipworth as our overseas speaker while Dr. Alson Chan and Dr. Adrian Wu shared their local experience with us in this event. Dr. Alson Chan continued to work with FMSHK to provide the highly successful Allergy Certificate Course this year. Dr. Philip Li and Dr. Marco Ho, on behalf of HKIA, also participated in Multispecialty Medical Mega Conference which was held on 11-12 September.

## HKIA Newsletter

Dr. Jamie S.D. Rosa Duque, the chief editor, has continued to work hard along with Associate Editors, Dr. Jason Chan, Dr. Agnes Leung, and Dr. Temy Mok, to ensure the highest quality of our Newsletter. Thank you to the leadership of Jamie and all the contributors to Newsletter. The content of our newsletters would not have been so rich and clinically relevant without your efforts.

## Vision for the coming year

I would like to thank our Office Bearers Dr. Helen Chan, Prof. TF Leung, Dr. Roland Leung, our immediate past president Dr. Marco Ho, and all our council members and advisors for their hard work and suggestion making 2021 a successful year despite all the difficulties and limitation imposed by the pandemic. Four council members have served the Council for 4 years. They are Dr. Elaine Au, Dr. Lee Tak-Hong, Dr. Alfred Tam and Dr. Yeung Chi-Keung. I would like to thank them for their services and advice.

Although we are slowly adapting our daily life to this new “pandemic norm”, we are beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel with increasing vaccination rates and arrivals of new effective drugs. I look forward to the day when most if not all restrictions related to pandemic will be lifted. Stay healthy!



Professor Gary Wong  
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