

President's Report at AGM 2023

Professor Gary Wong

We are glad that the World Health Organization has declared the end of the global emergency status for Covid-19 in May, 2023, and people around the world are able to get back to their normal activities. The measures used to combat the pandemic have been unprecedented, and there were many lessons learnt over the past three years regarding the optimal individual and community approach to minimize the threats of a new infections. The relationship of infections, immunity, and allergy is complex. The exposure to a variety of microbes in early life is known to be important for the development of a 'healthy' immune system. Allergy is an abnormal manifestation of our immune system such that a variety of conditions will develop. The experience of the pandemic may have changed the hygiene practice of many people around the world. We will need to observe if such changes may have influence the development of allergies in people across the globe.

Hong Kong Allergy Convention 2023

The Hong Kong Allergy Convention 2023 held on 7 - 8 October will certainly be remembered for a long time to come. It was a physical event that attracted hundreds of participants, but it also attracted typhoon Koinu to pay a short visit to Hong Kong. The decision made to go ahead with the meeting was not easy. Typhoon Koinu turned out to be more than a puppy. All speakers arrived Hong Kong safely. Despite typhoon signals number 8 hoisted during much of the time of our meeting, we had a fairly large audience at the convention center. We had the inaugural Professor Tak-Hong Lee Memorial Lecture delivered by Professor Chris Corrigan from the UK. We have speakers from all over the world including UK, USA, Japan, Australia, Portugal, Singapore along with our excellent speakers from Hong Kong. The topics included asthma, COPD, food allergy, drug allergy, novel vaccines, atopic dermatitis, and anaphylaxis. We must thank the support of our members of the organizing team for their efforts in putting together such an informative program. Carmen Mai and her team have done a wonderful job in ensuring the smooth running of the meeting despite the problems caused by the typhoon. The two practical workshops were well attended and thanks to the efforts of Prof TF Leung, Dr Philip Li, and Dr Agnes Leung in organizing these educational sessions.

HKIA Research Grants

We have restarted our scheme of the HKIA Research Grant, aiming to provide early seeding funding for young researchers in the field of allergy. In the history of this grant, we are very happy to see high quality work and the related publications in high impact journals in the allergy field. The recipients are expected to present their findings in our educational events, and they will be invited to speak in our symposia. We have clarified the rules for submission of the grant reports, and we encourage researchers to apply for this grant to support their work in answering their important research questions in the field of allergy.

Other Educational Activities

With the hard work of Dr Alson Chan and Dr Philip Li, HKIA continued to work with FMSHK and the hybrid event of the Multispecialty Medical Mega Conference which was held on 9-10 September. These events are important in informing practitioners the latest updates in the field of allergy, thereby patients with allergies will be able to receive the best evidence-based care. I would like to thank Dr Chan and Dr Li for their efforts in these important activities.

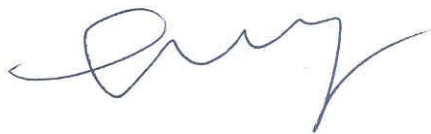
HKIA Newsletter

Dr Marco Ho has been the chief editor leading this important effort in providing important news and information for members. His team is supported by my capable associate editors including Dr Jason Chan, Dr Agnes Leung, and Dr Temy Mok. With the support of all members of HKIA and the recipients of the HKIA Research Grant, the Newsletter will be an important platform for dissemination of timely information in the field of allergy. I appreciate the excellent efforts of Dr Marco Ho and his team on this endeavor.

Vision for the Coming Year

The success of our Institute is the result of all the hard work of all Office Bearers, Dr Helen Chan, Dr Philip Li, Dr Roland Leung, and our council members and advisors. There are many planned activities in the coming year including our annual scientific meeting 2024 along with other collaborative CME activities. All council members and members of HKIA are encouraged to provide comments and suggestions for the program of these educational activities.

The Covid-19 pandemic is now history. We must learn from the past in order to perform better in the future while the long term effects of the Covid-19 in the development of allergy is still not clear. Allergy is a rapidly evolving field and I am sure HKIA will continue to take up the important role in supporting education and research for the benefits of patients suffering from allergies.



Professor Gary Wong
President
The Hong Kong Institute of Allergy