

Obituary of Dr CHIU Man Chun (1949-2021)



A Life Passionately Lived

After graduating from the Medical Faculty of The University of Hong Kong in 1974, Dr Chiu Man Chun underwent general paediatrics training in Paediatric A Unit of Queen Elizabeth Hospital and received subspecialty training in paediatric nephrology in Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children and Guy's Hospital, London. Dr Chiu was a pioneer in paediatric intensive care service and brought in neonatal intensive care in the era without neonatal intensive care units. He piloted continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis and continuous arteriovenous haemofiltration in infants. Dr Chiu expanded and eventually consolidated paediatric nephrology subspecialty services when he took up the consultant post in Princess Margaret Hospital in 1988. He was Chief of Service from 1992 till his retirement in 2010. Dr Chiu was also Co-chairman of Central Co-ordinating Committee (COC Paediatrics) of the Hospital Authority from 2002 to 2005.

Dr Chiu had not only laid a solid foundation for the development of paediatric nephrology in Hong Kong. Through his vast international networks and leadership in the Asian Paediatric Nephrology Association and International Paediatric Nephrology Association, he had also crafted the substantial international presence of the Hong Kong Paediatric Nephrology community in academia, service development, training and fraternity. He was the key driver in the development of paediatric nephrology in many Chinese cities and the Guest Professor of several top Children Hospitals in Beijing and Shanghai. During his long and distinguished career, Dr Chiu was also a staunch supporter to developing the adolescent medicine services in Hong Kong.

Recounting Dr Chiu's dedicated service to Hong Kong College of Paediatricians is like writing a mini-history of the founding and growth of the College. Dr Chiu was one of the 30 Subscribers to the formation of Hong Kong College of Paediatricians in May 1991. He served as the Honorary Secretary from 1991 to 1997, and had remained on the College Council until 2005. During his terms, he was one of the first members of the Scientific and Postgraduate Committee (1991-1993), which was later reformed to become the Education Committee in 1993. A first member of the Examination Committee in 1993, Dr Chiu was also the Committee Chairman from 1999 to 2005. He also had a long service on the Accreditation Committee from 1997 to 2015. He was the College representative to the Part I Board of Examiners of the UK College, and was an examiner in the clinical examinations both in Hong Kong and the UK.

When the development of subspecialty training was eagerly awaited about a decade after our College's inauguration, Dr Chiu joined the Task Force for Higher Training of Paediatric Subspecialties when it was set up in 2001. He had been a pivotal member in the transformation of the Task Force into the Working Group on Accreditation of Paediatric Subspecialties in 2008, and ultimately in 2013 to the present-day Committee for Subspecialty Boards.

Dr Chiu was a visionary leader. He built arches for paediatrics and child health to reach high. Other than innovative in ward re-designs, he was especially masterful in constructing service models. He established the Paediatric Nephrology Centre and Centre for Paediatric Infectious Diseases in Princess Margaret Hospital. Working with Sir Cyril Chantler and the local stakeholders, Dr Chiu masterminded the service model of a Children's Hospital for Hong Kong in his report titled "For the Future Generation and Paediatrics" in 2007. It had become the blueprint of the Hong Kong Children's Hospital now towering on the South Apron of the old Kai Tak Airport.

Dr Chiu contributed immensely to the novel paediatric services at the HKU-Shenzhen Hospital. The department has become a model paediatric centre providing services and specialist training in general paediatrics, paediatric subspecialties and neonatology in Mainland China.

Being a devoted Christian, Dr Chiu had made good use of the creative gift from God. He wrote prolifically in a broad range of styles. He was a voluntary editor of Breakthrough Magazine. In his very busy days as a junior doctor, he was a popular columnist that shared many touching experiences and reflections in his patient encounters under the pen name "梓翔". These stories were compiled into "醫生札記" (1980). It was one of the 10 most recommended books for student readers in 1990-1991. About infectious diseases, there were "兒童及青少年SARS面面觀" (2003) and "流感、禽流感真貌" (2006). In "弦動人生" he wrote about his inspirations and testimony to God during a South American trip after he had retired from the Hospital Authority. Many generations of paediatricians have benefited from Dr Chiu's clinical vademecum and textbooks. These included five editions of Paediatric Manual, Paediatric Nephrology Handbook (co-authored with Dr YU Chau Leung) and Neonatal Manual (co-authored with Prof FOK Tai Fai). He also edited Practical Paediatric Nephrology - an Update of Current Practices with Professor Hui Kim YAP. It is his magnum opus and a classic must-read for paediatricians in Hong Kong, Singapore, Mainland China and beyond.

Dr Chiu was well known for his musical talents. He founded the HK Medical Association Choir to complement the HK Medical Association Orchestra, bringing many doctors, nurses and their families together to make music for charitable causes. Music was with him everywhere he worked and served: he had organized chamber music performances in his department at Princess Margaret Hospital; he put together large concerts to celebrate monumental events in the paediatric nephrology community. These concerts were often very successful fund-raisers, too. He wrote a total of 36 well-known Chinese hymns for the Christian music ministry. His healing power came not only from his medical expertise, but also by being a man for all men. He was loving, caring, committed, humorous and generous. Being a Wahyanite, he had put the welfare and happiness of all close to his heart. His benevolence had transformed the lives of many.

Our College mourns with a heavy heart the passing of Dr Chiu, a giant, a legend, and a paediatrician that we all look up to. We shall treasure the legacy he had bestowed upon us, and follow his footsteps to strive for excellence in Paediatrics.

We send our sincerest condolences to Dr Chiu's family. Our thoughts are with them.

Dear Dr Chiu, we thank you with all our hearts. May you have eternal peace in God's love.

The Council on behalf of Hong Kong College of Paediatricians