

HKIA Awards

HKIA Outstanding Contributions to Clinical Allergy Award

Dr. Marco HO

Dr. Ho studied Medicine and graduated at HKU in 1994 and completed his training in Paediatrics 1995-2001 and in Allergy & Clinical Immunology 2001-03 under supervision of Prof YL Lau. He was a Research Fellow at Royal Children Hospital, Melbourne 2005-06 under mentorship of the world experts in food allergy Dr. David Hill and Professor Katie Allen.

Dr. Ho was appointed an Associate Consultant in Queen Mary Hospital in 2006, with a remit to set up an Allergy Service at Queen Mary Hospital, Hong Kong. He was promoted and appointed a consultant in 2014 at which time he became the Clinical leader of immunology and allergy in the public sector. In this role he led and developed the delivery of a seamless and quality secondary/tertiary service for complex allergy cases and quaternary service for primary immunodeficiency disorders. This included genetic diagnosis and stem cell transplantation for Hong Kong and numerous regional referrals (Beijing, Shanghai, Macau, Singapore). He was awarded QMH's Outstanding Staff for his clinical excellence in diagnosing and treating various rare and complex immunological disorders.

His Allergy service in HK was dedicated to food and drug/vaccine allergy. It was the first of its kind in Hong Kong and was a comprehensive service that included a "one stop" clinic for assessment, testing and dietetic advice for children and families.

As a consultant he impressively exceeded all expectations of him. His achievements included establishing a public-private interface to take care of allergic patients ; creating seamless immunology-allergy care by restructuring and reorganizing medical services into collaborative networks with other providers and carers in the community; leading training and enhancing the role of nurse practitioners in offering secondary level immunology allergy care; developing outcome-focused health care in anaphylaxis care to meet community expectations; promoting the involvement of the community as partners in the caring process of food allergy patients and families; leading and implementing the Hong Kong College of Paediatricians' Paediatric Immunology and Infectious Diseases subspecialty training programmes; reviewing allergy and clinical immunology services and pathways for children in Hong Kong in line with the Hospital Authority's Specialised Services as defined by individual hospitals and relevant local standards; developing and implementing standard operating procedures, e.g. food and drug challenge protocols. He collaborated with colleagues of different hospitals and established the anaphylaxis guideline for children.

Dr. Ho also co-founded Allergy HK, which is a charity organization and patient support group, in 2008. He was the Chairman in 2013-2015 and had successfully fund-raised for setting up a community allergy education resource centre in 2017. Dr. Ho has published a series of books written in Chinese for educating public on proper community allergy care which was bestowed the prestigious HKU Knowledge Exchange Award 2011.

In 2016, Dr. Ho was awarded the Sir Patrick Manson Gold Medal from HKU for his MD thesis dedicated for the clinical management of food allergy and anaphylaxis in children. He has authored and co-authored more than 100 peer- reviewed journal papers.

In 2018, Dr. Ho established a community allergy centre at Virtus Medical Group whereby he serves as the director of allergy and immunology and provides a comprehensive allergy diagnostic service and novel allergen and biologics immunotherapy. He continues his part-time consultant post at Queen Mary Hospital with weekly public immunology clinics contributing to service, research and training of allergy/immunology trainees and education of medical students at HKU and Macau University of Science and Technology.

Finally, Dr. Ho is the immediate past president of the Hong Kong Institute of Allergy and played a major role in growing the specialty of allergy in Hong Kong during his tenure. The impact of Dr. Ho's contributions to Allergy and Clinical Immunology in HK is exemplary and he is most deserving of the HKIA's Lifetime award for Outstanding Contributions to Clinical Allergy.