

The following is the speech by Dr SP Mak as the President of the College on the retirement of Professor Anthony Hedley. The speech summarized all the major contributions Professor Hedley had made to our College and public health in Hong Kong.

HKCCM – Professor AJ Hedley

Professor Hedley, ladies and gentlemen,

This evening, I have mixed feelings. I feel sad knowing that our long time comrade, a visionary leader and great teacher in public health, not only retires but also leaving Hong Kong. But I also feel joyful seeing that finally he could happily retreat to a beautiful resort in UK. Let me now express, on behalf of our College our appreciation for Professor Anthony Johnson Hedley.

Professor Hedley has made enormous contribution to the development of our college. He had served as the first chief censor, from 1991-95 when the HKCCM was first formed, and then became Vice President from 1995-97. Since then he continue to serve on the Council and various committees, including helping the landmark formation of three subspecialties.

Many of you sitting here can testify with me on the enthusiasm and devotion of Professor Hedley on training and examination preparation. Many, who followed his advice, passed. When some Hong Kong candidates had failed, we could even feel Tony's disappointment and sadness often exceeded that of the candidates. He is the strongest advocate for professional training in public health. Can I have a show of hands: how many of you here have received from him advice on examination? Well you may also wish to know that the first one to have benefited from him in Hong Kong was Dr KK Cheng, who is now professor of epidemiology in Birmingham University.

As a tribute to his contributions, Tony was conferred the prestigious College's Honorary Fellowship in 2005.

Tony's passion in public health is most widely known to be tied up with tobacco control. But his early years in Hong Kong were filled with many pioneering work and projects on public health advocacy. To name a few, he was the first one who raised the queries about the need and the promotion of breast cancer screening in HK. The main local research papers on cancer screening and prevention were master-minded by Professor Hedley. His also writes frequently letters to the SCMP editors, challenging public health enemies and those with vested interests. I bet Tony ranks number one that has sent the greatest number of letters to SCMP as a public health practitioner! The latest achievement, amongst others, is launch of the Hedley Environmental Index, which monitors and publishes in real-time the economic costs of Hong Kong's air pollution in terms of public health impacts and their monetary value.

On tobacco control, Tony was appointed a member of the Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health in 1994 and Chairman from 1997-2002. He was awarded a World Health Organisation Medal for Outstanding Contributions to Public Health in 1999, and the Bronze Bauhinia Star Award of the HKSAR Government in 2000. I would also skip his other achievements like being instrumental in the setting up of the Government's Health Services Research Fund, pioneered our air pollution and so and forth.

Tony, your retirement leave is a great loss to public health in Hong Kong! You will be missed by all of us! I wish you all the best in your retirement! And don't forget to drop us a note to keep in touch, by email, facebook, youtube or whatever techies' tools! The College always stands ready to welcome you!