On 15th of December 2017, speakers, delegates and attendees from over 10 countries in the Asia Pacific region and beyond congregated at the Postgraduate Education Centre of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) at Prince of Wales Hospital, Hong Kong, for the first Asia Pacific Advanced Heart Failure Forum (APAHFF). APAHFF was organised by the Division of Cardiology, and co-organised with the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery and the Nethersole School of Nursing, CUHK. Endorsed by the Asian Pacific Society of Cardiology and the Hong Kong College of Cardiology, APAHFF was a clinical educational event in academic and media partnership with Heart Asia. Credits towards continuing education for medical, nursing, pharmacy and other allied health professionals were available to eligible attendees.

The Forum was focused on multidisciplinary care and management options for advanced HF, particularly mechanical circulatory support (MCS) (e.g. left ventricular assist device (LVAD), extracorporeal life support (ECLS)) and palliative and supportive care for end-stage HF. These are currently under-utilised in the Asia Pacific region but are important options that can impact on patients’ experience, quality of life and outcomes.

The opening ceremony was officiated by the Secretary for Food and Health of the Hong Kong SAR, Prof Sophia Chan, JP, and the Vice-Chancellor/President of CUHK, Prof Joseph Sung, SBS, JP, MD, PhD. The Keynote Lecture entitled “Heart Function Replacement: The Current State and a Look Into the Future” was delivered by the cardiothoracic surgeon Prof Steven T sui (Papworth Hospital, Cambridge UK), followed by sequential Plenary Session lectures in the morning on establishment of HF and MCS programmes, and accomplishments and progress in cardiac transplantation at different centres in the Asia Pacific region. Plenary Session speakers came from Singapore, Thailand, Australia, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong SAR.

Concurrent sessions in the afternoon included presentations on the latest in our understanding of cardiac resynchronisation therapy (CRT) non-responders, simultaneous CRT in surgical valvular patients with severe HF, challenges in surgical management of severe aortic stenosis with reduced ejection fraction, HF and rheumatic disease in India, patient selection for successful MCS, perioperative and intraoperative imaging, troubleshooting and management of MCS and its complications and clinical challenges associated with management of the right heart. Equally informative were presentations on perioperative care of LVAD patients, management of onco-cardiology patients, service planning for supportive cardiology, models for integrative palliative care for HF, and management of drug-related problems in advanced HF. These talks were delivered by overseas speakers from India, Japan, The Netherlands, USA and Singapore, and by local speakers from CUHK and Prince of Wales Hospital. Further details are available here: http://www.mect.cuhk.edu.hk/APAHFF.

In this special issue, I am pleased to let our readers know that we have compiled and collated the conference proceedings from APAHFF 2017 in abstract form. It is hoped that the information gathered from a wide range of different HF programmes, clinical pathways and management schemes can be shared across the Asia Pacific region and beyond for establishing and developing service lines and programmes to benefit patients with advanced cardiac disease.

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