



In Memoriam: Professor Sir David Todd (1928-2017)

Dear Fellows and Members,

The Hong Kong College of Physicians mourns with immense sadness the passing away of Professor Sir David Todd on 16th August 2017.

Sir David has been the Giant of Medicine in Hong Kong and was beloved by all his students, colleagues and friends. He has been a role model for all of us as a most distinguished physician, scientist and medical educationist. Sir David's tremendous respect and affection for his patients became the life force of his career. Even more extraordinary was his ability to influence those around him, his students and colleagues, to care for their patients with passion, compassion and humility and at the same time exercising clinical skills and scientific advancement.

Sir David's grand vision in fostering and upholding professionalism in medicine led to the creation of the Hong Kong College of Physicians. He founded our College in the year 1986 with a legion of senior physicians and became the Founding President. Sir David's work has contributed enormously to advancing the science and art of Medicine, developing and maintaining professional standards and ethical integrity, and promoting and monitoring advanced medical education. He remained as President of our College until 1992 and has served as an ex-officio Council Member ever since. Under Sir David's leadership, a 1985 agreement with the Royal Colleges of Physicians of United Kingdom was made to hold the entire MRCP examinations in Hong Kong. This was the first time such a course was pursued, and history attests to the trust the Royal Colleges have placed on Sir David as Chief Organiser and Examiner, and their confidence in the professional training Sir David had been able to develop and uphold. The David Todd lectureship was created by the College in 1996 to award and honor distinguished young physician scientist. In recognition of all the groundbreaking contributions that Sir David made to internal medicine in Hong Kong, the College conferred Honorary Fellowship to him in 1997.

The success of our College has prompted the establishment of other specialties in internal medicine after 1993. Under the leadership of Sir David, such good work was extended to specialist practitioners of medicine at large. After serving as Chairman of the Preparatory Committee and President of the Interim Council (1990-1992), Sir David became Founding President of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine in 1992 and served till 1996. He was instrumental in introducing continuing medical education as a mandatory requirement for specialist registration, proving to the community that professional competence to be safe guarded among the Academy's Fellows. Sir David was conferred Honorary Fellow of the Academy in 1997.

Professor Todd ("Tat Yeh" as his fond nickname to all of us) was the Professor of Medicine, University of Hong Kong (1972-1974), and succeeded Prof AJS McFadzean as Head in 1974-1989. He served as Sub-Dean of Medicine (1976-78) and Pro-Vice Chancellor (1978-80). He retired as Emeritus Professor in 1994. All his students, regardless of what field they go into, have very fond memories of him. Countless numbers of medical leaders in Hong Kong in the past 40-50 years, be they in public clinical service, academia, health administration or private practice, certainly felt the honor of being able to be his students at times.

Sir David's contribution to public service was equally illustrious. He was Chairman of the Research Grants Council (1991-93), a member of the first Hospital Authority Board in 1990 and Chairman of its Health Services Research Committee (1993-97), Chairman of the AIDS Trust Fund (1993-97). He also served in the Trustee of Croucher Foundation, SK Yee Medical Foundation and Chevening Scholarship Board of Advisors. The list is too numerous to be comprehensive. With all his contributions Sir David was awarded OBE (1982) and CBE (1990), and enjoyed the distinction of being the first person in Hong Kong to be knighted for his contribution to Medicine in 1995.

To many of us, Sir David was a very powerful man in the field of Medicine; but he never acted like one. He was a gentleman, a pioneer, a legend, a great human, and a great humanitarian act with humbleness and humility. His unsurpassed intellect, passion and courage has changed the landscapes of Medicine of Hong Kong. Our College offers the greatest salute to this icon of Medicine of Hong Kong and mourns over the loss of him. Sir David will always be in our heart and our College offers the deepest condolences to Sir David's family.

Professor Philip KT Li
President
Hong Kong College of Physicians

Professor Richard YH Yu
Senior Advisor
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