

What is the preparation or expectation for overseas training?

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The germination of an idea....

- 1986 – Dr. Keith Halnan from the British Postgraduate Medical School in London
- State of postgraduate medical education and training in HK
- American College of Cardiology (ACC) delegation led by Dr. Eliot Corday and Dr. Robert Fry met members of the Executive Board of the HK Heart Foundation
- An idea to establish the HKHF Fellowship Program

Putting an idea into practice....

- 1992 – Establishment of the Hong Kong College of Cardiology
- Guidelines for Adult Cardiology Training in HK
- HK to send its trainees abroad for advanced subspecialty training after they have completed their core training locally

Seeking Designated Training Centers in the US

- Cleveland Clinic Foundation
- Mayo Clinic
- University of Michigan
- Stanford University

Formation of HK Heart Foundation Fellowship Program

- December 1992
- Donation of HK\$500,000 each year from Sir QW Lee
- 4 fellowship awards
- Additional centers:
 - University of California San Francisco (UCSF)
 - Harvard University
 - Columbia University

Level of training

- Level 3 training in US Core Cardiology Training (COCATS)
- Advanced training for at least one year, learning to select, perform and interpret specific procedures at a highly skilled level
- Guided by mentors appointed by the program directors
- Clinical experience was essential, participation in research was desirable
- After their return to HK, they will be qualified to run subspecialty services as directors and pass on what they have learned
- All training centers were accredited by the Accreditation Council of Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)
- Non-ACGME accredited sub-specialty training for HKHF fellows since 2016

Financial Requirements

- HK Heart Foundation Fellow will be given one year of paid study leave
- By the turn of the 21st century, HKHF Fellowship was converted into half award and half loan
- Length of study leave for HA doctors was trimmed to 3-6 months
- Verbal agreement with HA to grant the HKHF fellows half-pay study leave for one year
- Many regional hospitals still agreed to give the HKHF fellows 6 months of full-pay and 6 months of no-pay study leave for one year

Securing J-1 visa to enter the US

- The Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) is the federal agency that sponsor the entry of international medical graduates into the US through the issue of the Exchange Visitor (J-1) visa
- USMLE Step 1 (basic medical science), Step 2 CK (Clinical Knowledge) and Step 2 CS (Clinical Skill)
- Convinced ECFMG to accept HA for issuing the Letter of Need for visa application (usually can only be issued by the Ministry of Health of the foreign country)

Summation

- By 2023, the Heart Foundation has granted over 100 fellowship awards
- To establish Hong Kong as a leading Heart Center in China