



Bringing emergency care into the community: an interview with Dr Chin-hung Chung

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Having been both an emergency medicine consultant and hospital chief executive, Dr Chin-hung Chung has been instrumental in the evolution of emergency medicine in Hong Kong, and is a renowned pioneer and leader in the field. The Hong Kong Society for Emergency Medicine and Surgery, the Hong Kong College of Emergency Medicine, and the A&E Training Center at Tang Shiu Kin Hospital were all established under his leadership.

Outside of his illustrious medical career, Dr Chung is also a keen advocate of first-aid promotion. Since 1991, he has been working for the Hong Kong St John Ambulance and is currently the Director of the Association, where he takes up administrative, course development, and teaching duties. A firm believer in the importance of good prehospital care, he utilises his expertise as an emergency physician to introduce advanced and cutting-edge courses to the organisation. Over the years, he has brought more than 20 training courses into Hong Kong, including the Prehospital Trauma Life Support course and the Advanced Medical Life Support course (through the China-Hong Kong Chapter of the American College of Surgeons), to name but a few. To further promulgate prehospital trauma care, Dr Chung also translated the 6th edition of the Prehospital Trauma Life Support course manual in 2008. The translation of this 600-page textbook took him one and a half years to complete and the textbook was also used in Mainland China and Taiwan.

True to the motto of St John Ambulance—“For the Service of Mankind”, Dr Chung incessantly

strives to launch projects for the benefit of Hong Kong citizens. One of his cardinal achievements was the promotion of public access to automated external defibrillators (AED) throughout Hong Kong in 1999. Today, St John Ambulance continues to regularly hold AED courses for the public, and knowledge of proper AED usage is a prerequisite for brigade members of the organisation. Since 2006, Dr Chung has led mass cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training programmes in different areas of Hong Kong. Particularly worthy of mention is one that he initiated in January 2010, comprising 5857 participants and breaking the then Guinness World Record for the largest CPR training session in a day.

Dr Chung spares no effort to extend the coverage of emergency care to all facets of society. He envisioned that if local taxi drivers knew first-aid, Hong Kong people would have access to mobile and easily available emergency care. Hence, he implemented and led a pilot project of free CPR training for taxi drivers in 2011. St John Ambulance Association also conducts free first-aid talks in local primary and secondary schools, where first-aid instructors provide a concise 1-hour lecture to all enrolled schools. Around 10 000 to 20 000 school students benefit from this programme annually.

Research is another major area of Dr Chung's work, as evidenced by more than 100 articles he has published. One of his key studies at St John Ambulance was a randomised trial on CPR teaching that demonstrated similar CPR performance by students taught by video self-learning and those

taught in a traditional classroom setting. This suggests video materials may be an effective and user-friendly mode of teaching CPR.¹ Since its publication, this paper has been widely recognised in the academic field and was cited by the American Heart Association in their latest 2015 guidelines.²

Dr Chung even extends first aid beyond humans—to dogs and cats. In cooperation with the Hong Kong Veterinary Association, St John Ambulance introduced the Pet First Aid course for pet owners and carers in 2015. The course has been very popular and oversubscribed, attesting to the need for first aid for ‘man’s best friends’.

For someone whose work has garnered

such great acclaim, Dr Chung has no thoughts of slowing down. One of his ongoing ventures involves advocating compulsory first-aid training for all local secondary school students. In view of the recent suicide epidemic in Hong Kong, he is also working on a counselling programme targeting schoolchildren, hoping to identify potential suicide cases before further tragedies occur. On a personal level, Dr Chung highly cherishes the job satisfaction and sense of achievement he gains from his work. Looking ahead, he hopes to carry on with his duties at the St John Ambulance Association and continue contributing for the service of mankind and beyond.

References

1. Chung CH, Siu AY, Po LL, Lam CY, Wong PC. Comparing the effectiveness of video self-instruction versus traditional classroom instruction targeted at cardiopulmonary resuscitation skills for laypersons: a prospective randomised controlled trial. *Hong Kong Med J* 2010;16:165-70.
2. Bhanji F, Donoghue AJ, Wolff MS, et al. Part 14: Education: 2015 American Heart Association Guidelines Update for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Emergency Cardiovascular Care. *Circulation* 2015;132(18 Suppl 2):S561-73.



(Facing page)
 Dr Chung (centre, speaking) lecturing in the Advanced Medical Life Support course
 (left)
 Dr Chung (right) receiving the Commander St John medal at the British Consulate