

Hong Kong College of Health Service Executives

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Message from the President

From Systems to People

It is nearly more than a decade ago that the Hospital Authority, the statutory body that manages all public health care institutions in Hong Kong, was established. For those who are not part of this massive organization, your only way to gauge the performance of this organization is through the media where you will read of both the good and bad bits, and more often than not, it is the "bad" bits that attract the media and your attention. The missing baby's body from the mortuary, the death of a young patient who was given chemotherapy through the wrong mode of administration, the women who had her "good" breast removed, the patient who had "instruments" left in her abdomen etc. These are probably the only way that you hear of this organization and it is no wonder that you are probably wondering what is happening to our public hospitals in Hong Kong.



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This is a publication of the Hong Kong College of Health Service Executives. The articles published are the expressed views of the authors and are not necessarily those of the HKCHSE.

However, if you are for some reasons, someone who is unfortunate to be bestowed with some kind of illness and you have to seek treatment from one of the HA's organizations, your story may or may not be positive either. You may, depending on where you live, have to wait for several months before you get an appointment to see a specialist. On the other hand, you may or may not be admitted to a fairly crowded ward, depending on whether you fall sick during one of the winter surge months. So, as consumer of the service, your views of our public health care system will vary.

But fear not, the story is the same elsewhere. Have you not heard of the doctor who killed many patients in the UK (the Shipman case), and the stories that we hear in our newspapers everyday are almost, if not, identical to the ones reported in the UK, USA, etc. So, what is wrong with all health care systems. The simple answer to this question is probably, there is nothing wrong at all, mistakes do happen and nothing in life is fool-proof, not the least in health care. But like everything else, we just have to keep on trying to reduce those mistakes and keep on trying to keep the counts (in terms of mistakes) low. So from the days of its establishment as a public statutory body, the HA has been trying very hard indeed to work on its systems. They implemented CQI, TQM, Risk Management, Clinical Audit, Clinical Governance, and now they are trying to go into

accreditation. (You name it, they have it). To someone from outside the organization, you will probably ask, so what's next? Indeed, this is the right question to ask: So, what's next?

I guess the answer to this question "So, what's next" is not hard to answer. They will probably just invent another system or copy another system from somewhere to try to make their organization safer. There is nothing wrong with this too. Don't we all copy good work of others? The point is, when are they going to start focusing on the most important part of the equation and that is : People

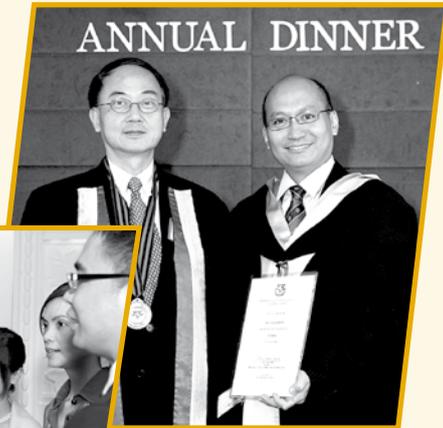
I often wonder if there is some form of relationship between the number of mistakes made by an organization and the morale of its staff? Of course, I am not saying that there is a relationship but mind you, mistakes are made by people! Mistakes do not happen by systems. There must be action taken by people in order for mistakes to happen. So, why all the fuss on systems! I am not saying that we do not have to improve our systems, we do but isn't it time that we examine what has gone wrong with our people, if indeed, there are problems here!

Let us hope that we will focus more on people and less on systems and indeed, connect the right people with the right systems for a better health care system in Hong Kong.

Dr M Y CHENG



2009 Annual Dinner





2009 Annual Conference cum Annual General Meeting





Our New Fellows



Ms Jenny Cheuk Wah CHAN



Dr. Ian Tsz Fung CHEUNG



Dr. Frank Wan Kin CHAN



Dr. Yee Hung CHONG



Dr. John Chun Kwan CHOW



Dr. Jenny Mei Yee LAM



Dr. Theresa Tak Lai LI



Ms Leslie Ching Yee SHIU

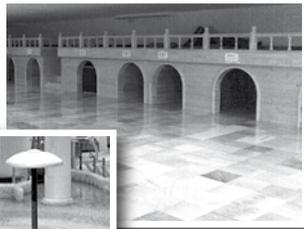


Dr. Eliza Lai Yi WONG



After four-hour onboard an overnight flight, the group arrived at Seoul at around 5:00 am on 29 April. The weather, albeit at around 10°C, was very comfortable for most of us. Instead of checking into a hotel with a plushy bed, a thoughtful trip to a spa-cum-water sports theme park was organized for us to have a refreshing yet innovative experience many of us have never tried before.

Sea La La Water Park ▶▶▶▶



A brief repose in Korean style at Sea La La gave many of us a revitalizing shot, refreshed us and prepared us for the first programme of the study tour – visit to the renowned Seoul National University Hospital (SNUH) (<http://www.snuh.org/english/>). Established in 1885 as Korea's first national hospital under the name Kwang Hye Won, the hospital has been a leader in medicine looking after Korea's public health over the past century. It later became an affiliate hospital of Seoul National University's College of Medicine and College of Dentistry before being recognized as a special corporate body under its current name of Seoul National University Hospital.

SNUH Museum of Medicine ▶▶▶▶



SNUH Waiting Hall ▶▶▶▶

Today, SNUH comprises the Main Hospital, Children's Hospital, Dental Hospital, and Clinical Research Institute, apart from providing specialty services covering a full range of internal medicine and surgery specialties. With 1,600 hospital beds, among which 96 ICU and 35 NICU beds, approximately 1,600 inpatients and 5,000 outpatients are treated each day by 4,500 healthcare professionals, with 300 medical professors.

We were greeted warmly by the hospital's Public Relations Manager and its Assistant Director of Nursing, an elegant lady, who delivered an informative presentation on the hospital's background and its major services, followed by a brief visit to the hospital main building, International Healthcare Clinic and wards. Group members shared experiences on the use of clinical management system in the ward, nursing kardex, drug trolley, and even the roller board for patient transfer. The hospital impressed us, in particular, with its crowded yet orderly environment and high volume of daily patient visits. We were also shown around in the Museum of Medicine of the university hospital, introducing the background of medical services in Korea as well as a historical depiction of SNUH's journey of development.

◀◀◀◀ SNUH Presentation



◀◀◀◀ Ward Sharing

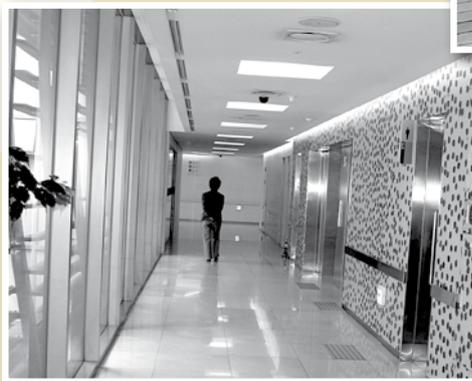
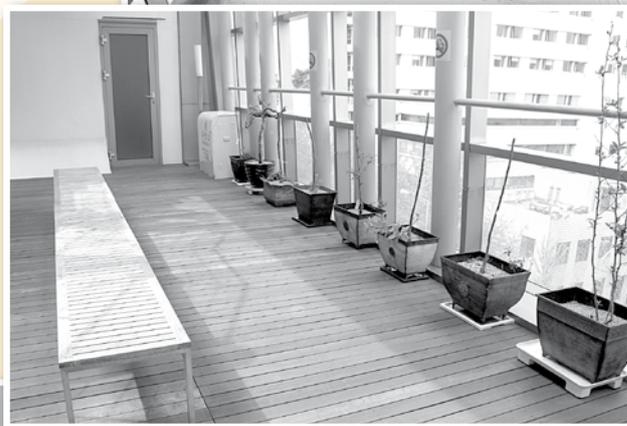
Exploring Seoul and the Korean Healthcare System in Four Days

safety net for the underprivileged. Other than rapid cost inflation esp. in long term care and mental care, the system also ran a risk of being abused by service providers.

Financed by public funding, Korea's health care system relies on the private sector for service delivery. Amidst issues of ageing population, escalating medical costs, rising demand and expectation, the Korean government encounters challenges of purchasing of services, regulation of quality and costs, increased tension with private providers, coverage for long term care by private health insurance and social insurance, as well as improvement of the governance structure so as to clarify roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders.

The second day of our study tour covered visits to two hospitals, namely CHA Women's & Children Hospital and Seoul National University Bundang Hospital (SNUBH).

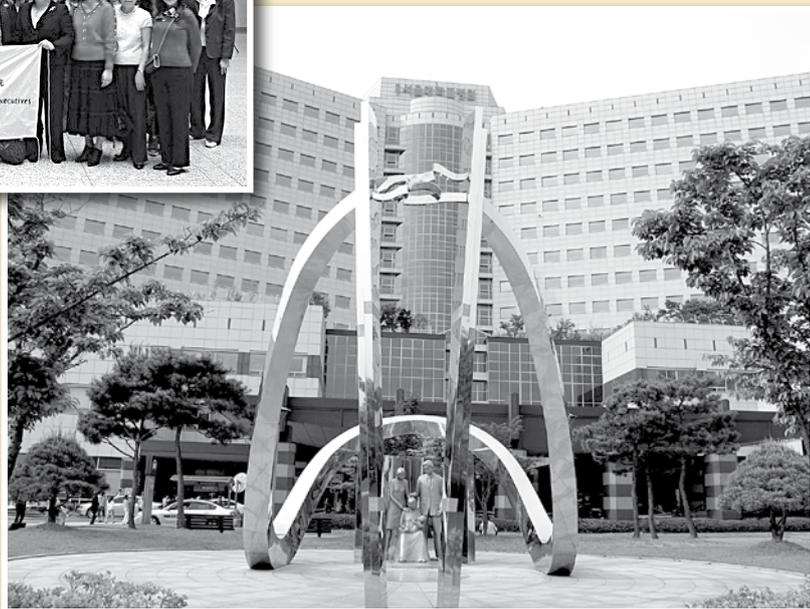
CHA refers to Christianity of Universe as Spirit of Agape (C), Humanism on Earth as Patient-centred care and service (H) and Academia as Mountain grounded on research and education (A). Designed to suit the needs of her clients, CHA Women's & Children Hospital (<http://www.chamc.co.kr/>) gained the American Institute of Architects National Healthcare Design Award in 2008 for its eco-friendly architectural design presenting an avant-garde modernist environmentally friendly building in a dense and suburban community in Seoul.



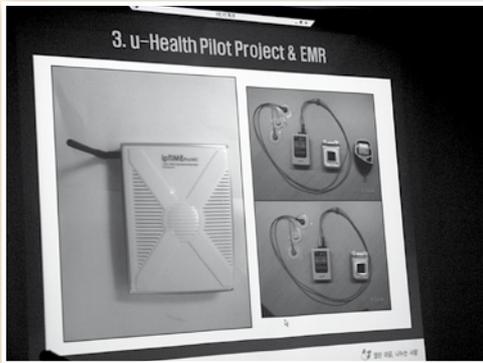
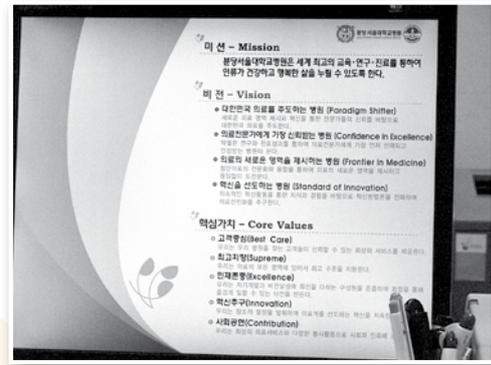
CHA Women's & Children Hospital and Seoul ▶▶▶▶

The last hospital on the study tour programme is Seoul National University Bundang Hospital (SNUBH) (<http://www.snubh.org>). Established in May 2003 in Bundang, Seongnam City, SNUBH is about one-hour drive from downtown Seoul. The hospital prides on its interior layout design, which focuses on convenience for its patients and harmony with nearby landscape. On entering the hospital, one will be amazed by its sky light atrium comparable to that of a five-star hotel! The lobby is indeed an ideal venue for concerts or other performances which could bring an atmosphere of joy, vitality and hope to both patients and employees of the hospital.

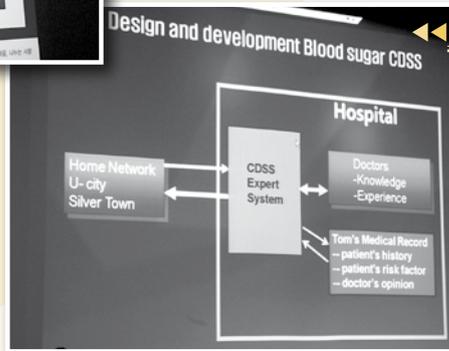
Korea is experiencing a rapid increase in its elderly population aged over 65, representing 10.7% of the entire nation. Despite the rapidly increasing demand for medical treatment, the actual situation shows a severe lack of medical treatment facilities, both public and private. Through a systematic study of elderly-related diseases, SNUBH is famous for its innovative environment specializing in disease treatment for the elderly through an EMR system instead of the conventional non-digital paper-chart facilities.



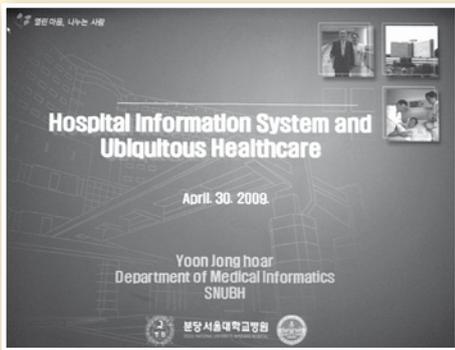
VMV on Monitor ▶▶▶▶



◀◀◀ U-Health pilot project



◀◀◀ BH presentation



Other manifestation of U-Hospital can be seen in its RFID technology at the hospital's Health Information Centre in which the location of the patient can be traced. Another innovative application adopted by the hospital is the monitoring of patient's sugar level – the U-Health pilot project monitors a patient's glucose level and if it falls outside the normal range, the patient will receive an alert through a text message on his/her mobile phone. Other than timely alert, this measure does serve as an instant reminder for the patient to reduce his sugar intake and heighten the patient's awareness of his own health.

Consisted of six centres, namely Geriatrics Medical Center, Heart Center, Cranial Nerve Center, Lung Center, Articulation Center, and the Health Improvement Center, the 900-bed SNUBH delivers a complete range of medical services through 23 departments, such as Internal Medicine, Surgery, Chest Surgery, Neurosurgery, Orthopedics, Plastic

Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynecology, and Pediatrics, catering to around 4,000 outpatient attendances daily.

After an eye-opening journey at SNUBH, the "study" part of the Study Tour has basically come to an end, leaving us the remaining day or so for the "tour" portion, which were equally exciting, if not more so. Certainly with thoughtful organization of Dr HC Ma and Mr Jimmy Wu, both council members of the College, we had the chances to have a comprehensive view of the most representative sightseeing spots in Seoul and most important of all, quench our thirst for spending and in turn boost the Korean economy, with our usual efficiency and effectiveness. Once again, my gratitude goes to the organizers, for taking excellent care of us.

Ms Linda SHU



