Obituary

Professor Shiu-Hung Lee

Professor Shiu-Hung Lee passed from this life on 9 January 2014 after a lifetime of contributions to the health and wellbeing of others. He graduated in medicine from the University of Hong Kong in 1958 and continued his studies in Singapore and London, becoming an internationally recognised expert in public health and occupational medicine. He often reminded me (CWB) that we were fraternity brothers, having had the same professor as our teacher. Prof Gordon King was the Dean of Medicine in Peking University, moving to a similar position in Hong Kong after World War 2. When a new medical school was established in Western Australia, Prof King moved to Perth and hence we shared a common educational heritage. With his respect for culture and history he always spoke highly of his teachers. It was typical of his sense of humour that when non-Asians had difficulty with pronouncing his name, he would reply “just call me Sweet Heart”.

Prof Lee was appointed to the Hong Kong government service in 1960 and held a variety of positions related to public health, infectious diseases and occupational medicine. In 1989, when the new Department of Health was established he became its first director. On retiring from public service in 1994, he took up a new challenge as Professor of Community Medicine at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. He devoted his efforts to education and the establishment of the School of Public Health in 2001, the first School of Public Health in Hong Kong. He was particularly interested in health promotion activities and worked to promote healthy schools and healthy cities in Hong Kong and mainland China.

He was also the founding President of the Hong Kong Society of Infectious Diseases and the Hong Kong Epidemiological Association. He was a regular attendee at APACPH conferences and hosted several public health meetings in Hong Kong. Following the SARS epidemic, he delivered a memorable lecture to APACPH on the epidemiology of the outbreak.

He was a generous host and many visitors enjoyed sharing a meal with him from the best Hong Kong cuisine available at his club.

It is a fitting memorial to the public health work of Prof Lee that Hong Kong has attained one of the longest life expectancies in the world, 82 years for men and 87 years for women. He will be sadly missed by those who he served in Hong Kong and by all of his colleagues in APACPH.

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