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SHORT COMMUNICATION

ISN moments—238 young Chinese nephrologists supported to learn from the World Congress of Nephrology 2013



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Summary The World Congress of Nephrology (WCN) provides a great opportunity for education for nephrologists, either experienced or in training, around the world. Support for nephrologists from the developing and remote regions is very important, in line with the missions of International Society of Nephrology Global Outreach programs. The collaboration with philanthropists to provide funding and the organization to have the appropriate training materials and media serve as a good model for future congresses.

世界腎臟病學大會(WCN)為全球資深的及受訓中的腎科醫生,提供了良好的學習機會。事實上,正如國際腎科學會的全球外展計劃所強調,對發展中及偏遠地區的腎科醫生提供支援是一項重要的任務。善長、慈善團體與專業學會的充分合作,可確保資金的募集及訓練平台的建立,以順利推動WCN在未來的進一步發展。

WCN 2013—held in Hong Kong on May 31 to June 4, 2013—was a great success. More than 5500 health care professionals and other delegates from over 120 countries participated in the Congress. The scientific and clinical research content was excellent with about 2000 abstract submissions. Among the attendees, 238 of them need a special mention. In June 2012, Richard Yu, Senior Advisor of Hong Kong Society of Nephrology (HKSAN), together with Philip Li, Chairman of the Local Organizing Committee,

WCN 2013 set out to develop the support needed for young nephrologists from all over China to come for learning at WCN 2013 and be exposed to the international nephrology arena. Their plan was endorsed by the council of the HKSAN. The necessary funding came from the generous donations of four local philanthropists, and also directly from the funds of the HKSAN. The aim was to support young nephrologists under 37 years old who would otherwise not have the chance to attend a major international nephrology meeting outside mainland China. Young nephrologists from remote provinces and cities throughout China were the target group who would benefit most from our support. HKSAN worked closely with the Chinese Society of Nephrology (CSN) in the selection process. Abstract

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Figure 1 The distribution of the 238 young nephrologists who received the travel grant, across 22 provinces, four municipal cities, and five autonomous regions all over China. Figures shown in brackets are the number of young nephrologists supported by the travel grant to attend the WCN 2013.

submission was encouraged, but was not a prerequisite for the travel grant awardees as many of them were from remote regions of China, and the main purpose of the awards was to give them the opportunity to come and learn. The travel grant included the WCN registration fee, travel, accommodation, some pocket expenses, and 1-year International Society of Nephrology (ISN) membership with educational journals.

In the end, 238 young nephrologists from 31 regions of China (22 provinces, 4 municipal cities and 5 autonomous regions) received the awards and attended the WCN 2013 (Fig. 1). This year's WCN had simultaneous interpretation in Putonghua in the main session of "Renal Replacement Therapy". This was to help the delegates acquire more knowledge in dialysis and kidney transplantation to aid them on the practical aspects of their clinical work when they returned home.

During the WCN, on June 1, 2013, an Appreciation Ceremony thanking the donors was held. The 238 awardees, council members of ISN, HKSN, and CSN were there to thank the four donors (Fig. 2). The excitement and enthusiasm of the young nephrologists having a chance to come and learn from the WCN was overwhelming.

After the WCN, questionnaires were sent out to all the awardees, and 116 responses were received. For 89 (76.7%) of them, it was their first time being out of mainland China; 37 (31.9%) had never attended a national nephrology meeting, and 103 (88.8%) had never attended an international nephrology conference. Nine (7.8%) had submitted an abstract, and five (4.3%) had a poster presentation. Table 1 summarizes some of the very positive responses of the awardees. One point to note is that 69% either agreed or strongly agreed that they could understand the lectures well in English. Hence, there is still a substantial proportion of these young nephrologists who probably benefit more from the availability of a simultaneous translation in Putonghua.

The main aim of this travel award—to support young nephrologists from the remote and less developed regions of China to benefit from advances in nephrology education at WCN—has undoubtedly been achieved. This also serves as a good model for the future if a number of young nephrologists from the region can be supported through collaboration of philanthropists and national societies to attend WCN. The improvement of care for kidney patients through these young nephrologists who attended WCN will

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