The first Summer School of the Asian Pacific Society of Hypertension (APSH)/ISH in the Asia Pacific region was held at the Beijing Eastern Garden International Conference Co., Ltd near Eastern lake, the site of the water events (rowing, kayaking etc.) of the Olympic Games in 2008. The venue was extraordinarily suitable for this event and was of a high quality.

The Summer School was opened at 9AM on Monday August 3, 2015 in a ceremony attended by the following distinguished guests and all the school participants:

Prof. Lisheng Liu, Former President of World Hypertension League
Prof. Guangling Li, Vice-director, Dept. of Disease Control, National Commission of Health and Family Planning
Prof. Zhaoxing Li, Chairman of Chinese Association of Public Diplomacy and Former Foreign Minister of China
Prof. Yuanhong Ding, Former Chinese Ambassador to United Nations, Switzerland and Belgium, and Head of Chinese Delegation to European Union
Prof. Trefor Morgan, Secretary of APSH
Prof. Ernesto Schiffrin, Former President of ISH
Prof. Giuseppe Mancia, Former President of ESH
Prof. Yong Huo, President of Chinese Society of Cardiology
Prof. Xiaoying Li, President of Chinese Society of Gerontology
Prof. Xinhua Zhang, Secretary General of World Hypertension League

The school ran over 5 days. The activities on each day consisted of discussion of a major topic in the morning. This was composed of talks by the faculty on major points amplified by presentations on specific points by the scholars. The afternoon sessions consisted of update sessions presented by the faculty on topics of major importance followed by research presentations by either the scholars or faculty.

There were a total of 31 scholars. One scholar from Pakistan was unable to obtain their Visa in time and was unable to attend. The participants were from Bangladesh 2, China 12, India 2, Indonesia 3, Japan 1, Malaysia 4, Nepal 2, Philippines 2, Singapore 2, Thailand 1.

The coordinator and organizer of the Summer School was Professor Zhaosu Wu, President of Chinese Hypertension League (CHL). The Dean of the School was Professor Trefor Morgan, Secretary General of APSH.

The International Faculty members were:

Giuseppe Mancia Milan, Italy
Ernesto Schiffrin Montreal, Canada

The regional faculty members nominated by sponsoring societies were:

Prof. Mark Nelson Australia
Prof. Yuqing Zhang China
Prof. Jiguang Wang China
Dr Arieska Ann Soenarto Indonesia
Prof. Rashid Rahman Malaysia
Prof. Subramanian Srinivas Singapore
Prof. Pankai Handa Singapore

The ISH New Investigator Committee was represented by Dr Sofie Brouwers from Belgium and Professor Fadi Charchar from Australia. Professor Michael O’Rourke from Australia was in Beijing at a separate conference and attended and spoke on his work on one day of the Summer School.

In addition to the educational and scientific activity, social programs were arranged during the after-school hours consisting of attendance at a Chinese Opera and a visit to the centre of Beijing for sightseeing and shopping.

All in all it was a full week of activity.

Themes of the Summer School covered in the Morning.

-Epidemiology and Prevention of Raised Blood Pressure
-Guidelines. Similarities and Differences. How to implement
-Blood Pressure Measurement. When, Where and How?
-Secondary Hypertension-- Investigation and Management
-Hypertension Management in Special Subgroups

Update Lectures by Faculty Members.

Sympathetic Nervous System and Hypertension - Giuseppe Mancia
Hyperaldosteronism - Ernesto Schiffrin
Resistant Hypertension - Rashid Rahman
Hypertension in acute stroke - Jiguang Wang
Sleep BP and cardiovascular disease - Trefor Morgan

Pictures below - left: Prof. Trefor Morgan (Dean) / Right: Prof. Zhaosu Wu (Coordinator/Organizer)

Evaluation

This Summer School was the first of its kind in the Asia Pacific region. The contents of the curriculum appeared to be appropriate to the participants. Update lectures by faculty members were of high quality, followed by panel discussions which were well received. Apart from introductory theme lectures by the faculty, every scholar was assigned and gave a presentation(s) on specific topics, followed by whole-class
discussions, which were very interactive and informative. Some scholars reported that this training course was the best they have ever attended and what they learnt will be very useful for their future career in combating hypertension and related diseases. As such, this Summer School will have important impact in the development of hypertension control programs in their own countries and furthermore in the Asia Pacific region. We are pleased that the first Summer School attained the main goal set by APSH and ISH -- to develop skills and expertise of emerging senior health workers from the Asia Pacific region in prevention, detection, diagnosis and clinical management of hypertension.

It is planned to hold a second Summer School in 2017. The duration and format has yet to be decided, but it was felt that there should be a greater opportunity for social interaction at this event.

Acknowledgements
The Summer School organizers are very grateful for the support and guidance from ISH, particularly Prof. Rhian M Touyz, ISH President. The Summer School organizers are also grateful for the generous support from Novartis Pharmaceutical and Merck & Co., Inc.

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Report of the first ISH/APSH Summer School in Asia and Australasia
Organized by the Chinese Hypertension League

Report by Sofie Brouwers and Fadi Charchar on behalf of the ISH New Investigator Committee

As Professor Morgan mentioned in his report, we were delighted to attend the Summer School as representatives of the ISH New Investigator Committee (NIC). The School was an excellent opportunity to meet and recruit new investigator colleagues from the Asia Pacific region. We both presented talks on our respective areas of interest. Fadi in the area of genomics and Sofie on the role of different drug classes in antihypertensive treatment. The response of the participants to our presentations was great and both talks stimulated much discussion. The event itself was very well organized with a well-balanced expert faculty from many countries. It was evident that the greatest contributions of the faculty were their openness to share their challenges in the field of hypertension research and their expert advice that comes from their par excellence CVs.

Mealtimes (always an adventure in China - especially when the staff do not speak English) and coffee breaks encouraged informal discussion amongst the scholars and faculty members. Discussion sessions were outstandingly managed and lead to academic stimulation of the group as a whole. It seemed that ideas were incubating for future projects and collaborations across fields and nationalities. Many of the social activities were fantastic. However, there was a big sigh of relief when the Karaoke night was cancelled for a shopping trip to Beijing.
In total, we were able to enthuse 31 participants to join the Society and become involved with the ISH New Investigator Network; established to serve as a platform for interaction between students and new investigators and allow new avenues for communication, collaboration and education. We enjoyed interacting and learning from our colleagues in the region. We feel that this is particularly important in light of the upcoming two ISH Biennial Scientific Meetings in Asia (Seoul - 2016 and Beijing - 2018). There was a lot of interest in the ISH Mentorship Scheme from participants. This is an exciting scheme where the ISH NIC introduce new investigator Society members to more experienced investigators from the rich membership of the ISH. One particular Society initiative that also created interest at the Summer School was the new Women in Hypertension Scheme spearheaded by ISH President Professor Touyz.

Most importantly of all we believe that we met a very motivated group of colleagues with high potential. This fruitful meeting allowed us to establish many new contacts with future collaborators and we believe that such activities are the best way to ensure more active involvement of new investigators in the Asia Pacific region with the ISH. We would particularly like to thank our new friends from the Summer School for helping with translation and for making the School an event to remember.