

HONORARY FELLOW

Prof. Sir Harry FANG MD, D. S. Sc, Mch Orth, FRCS, FRACS, FRCP, FHKAM

Prof. Sir Harry FANG is well known in the medical profession, especially in the field of rehabilitation and orthopaedic surgery. His contributions to the Academy, the community in Hong Kong and mainland are so many that it could take hours to describe, if they are to be mentioned one by one.



Born in Nanjing in 1923, Sir Harry moved to Hong Kong with his family in 1936. He received his education in China, Hong Kong and United Kingdom - graduating from medical school in Shanghai in 1947 and obtaining his medical degree from the University of Hong Kong in 1949.

In 1952, he was awarded a scholarship by the Sino-British Fellowship Trust to advance his study in orthopaedic surgery in United Kingdom. Sir Harry obtained his master degree in Orthopaedics from Liverpool University and FRCS (Edin) in 1955, FACS (USA) in 1968, FRACS in 1978, and FRCP (Edin) in 1984. He became a renowned spinal surgeon and in 1962 invented the transoral approach to the upper cervical spine. For his contribution to the medical profession, he has been awarded honorary doctorates and fellowships of prestigious institutions in Hong Kong and overseas. Sir Harry has made profound contributions to the community over the past years. He served the HK Government as Legislative and Executive Councillor during 1974 to 1985, and as member of numerous government and voluntary advisory boards and committees, including President of the Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation and Vice President of the Community Chest.

Sir Harry is perhaps best known in his pioneer role in the field of rehabilitation. He was the founder and chief advocate of major rehabilitation organisations locally and internationally, earning the title of Father of Rehabilitation. For this, he was honoured with the United Kingdom Man of the Year Award in 1981, Rehabilitation International Man of the Year in 1984 and Rehabilitation International Presidential Award for Outstanding and Distinguished Service to World Rehabilitation in 1988.

To the Academy, Sir Harry truly made original contributions. In 1983 following a report of the Medical Council on a Specialist Register for Hong Kong, Sir Harry called for an academy of medicine for Hong Kong, as he foresaw a need for Hong Kong's medical establishment to stand on its own feet in terms of administering, monitoring, and accrediting specialist vocational training. Whereas the many and sometimes overlapping Royal Colleges in the UK were fettered by historic divisions, Hong Kong had the opportunity to start with a clean slate. The probability of all specialties coming together under one roof, with all its inherent advantages, was in the final analysis very high. Although none disagreed that this was the proper way forward, Sir Harry nevertheless fell short of obtaining a mandate from the specialist societies under the Federation of Medical Societies of Hong Kong to proceed with forming an academy in 1985. The way was then left open for the Government to step in with a Working Party on Postgraduate Medical Education and Training led by Dr. Keith Halnan. The report of the Committee (commonly known as the Halnan Report) recommended the formation of the Academy. Sir Harry became a member of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine Preparatory Committee in 1989.

Without Sir Harry's effort, the Academy Building might not be in existence. In 1992, the government agreed to offer the land to the Academy, while the question of funding had been considerably taxing the minds of the HKAM Preparatory Committee and its Finance Committee. Through the good offices of Sir Harry, the then Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club had been approached for funding of the new headquarters, but the response to an initial request for HK\$50 million was delayed. There were many applications for funding on the waiting list and the general perception around town was that the doctors could fund themselves. Seeing this log jam, Sir Harry exhorted his colleagues to lobby any acquaintances connected with the Jockey Club in order to convince them of the importance of this project. Evidently these efforts were on target because, in October 1993, the Jockey Club Charities Trust announced that it had confirmed a grant of \$165 million for the construction of the Academy building on condition that the building would be named after the Jockey Club.