

## Dr. Hsiang-Lai Wen: Father of Hong Kong Neurosurgery

Sir,

Dr. Hsiang-Lai Wen MD (1923-10 April 2017) was popularly known as Father of Neurosurgery in Hong Kong, was a great teacher, golf player, and popularized acupuncture for anesthesia and drug deaddiction. He also introduced ventriculo-superior sagittal sinus shunt surgery and various neurosurgical procedure.

Dr. Wen was born in 1923 at town of Muntok, on Bangka Island, Indonesia. He graduated in the Medical College of Cheeloo in Chengdu, China, and he served in the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and Neurological Institute of University of Amsterdam. Dr. Wen was the first Chinese to become a diplomate of American Board of Neurological Surgeons.

He first joined West China Union University in Chendu, during 1942–1943 for medical graduation, but he had to interrupt studies due to the World War II and finally underwent medical training at the Medical College of Cheeloo University in Chengdu, during 1945–1949. He completed internship at Toronto General Hospital at the University of Toronto. Dr. Wen completed Neurosurgical Residency in the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, USA and became first Chinese to qualify diplomate of the American Board of Neurological Surgery. Later, he also worked at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and at the Neurological Institute of the University of Amsterdam.

In the second phase of professional career, he returned back in 1956 to join Queen Mary Hospital, Hongkong, and became the first neurosurgeon in Hong Kong, and popularly called "father of neurosurgery;" later on, he joined the Department of Neurosurgery in Kwong Wah Hospital. He was actively involved in setting up of a famous neurosurgical specialized unit at Kwong Wah Hospital, to provide free neurosurgical care. He also helped in establishment of Research Institute of Neuroscience at the Second Affiliated Hospital of Guangzhou Medical College in 1988.

Dr. Wen introduced and popularized the ventriculo-superior sagittal sinus shunt surgery for the management of hydrocephalus and was considered as pioneer for the use of acupuncture for anesthesia and for the treatment of drug detoxification and deaddiction and pain ablation.

Dr. Wen was the President of the Asian Australasian Congress of Neurological Surgeons and also served as the Vice President of the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies.

Dr. Wen was devoted golfer and captained the Hong Kong team (Southeast Asian Amateur Golf Team Championship). Dr. Wen also worked as pilot with the China National Aviation Corporation during the World War II.

Dr. Wen continuously tried to improve the standard of neurosurgery in Hong Kong and Southern China. He established the Hong Kong Neurosurgical Society in 1981 and served as the Foundation President of the Society.

Dr. Wen continuously strived for the development of neurosurgical specialty and continuously mentored two generation of neurosurgeon, a great mentor and had thousands of happy patients treated by him.

### Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

### Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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### Access this article online

#### Quick Response Code:



#### Website:

www.asianjns.org

#### DOI:

10.4103/ajns.AJNS\_164\_17

**How to cite this article:** Satyarthee GD. Dr. Hsiang-Lai Wen: Father of Hong Kong neurosurgery. Asian J Neurosurg 2019;14:332.

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