



# Shanghai Chest Hospital—looking forward

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It is a distinct honor for me to provide a commentary on this 2017 Annual report from the Shanghai Chest Hospital (SCH) (1). I have had a close relationship with this institution and many of its outstanding surgeons for several decades. This 2017 Report is a remarkable document. The tripartite mission of every excellent academic medical center is patient care, education and research scholarship. The SCH is fulfilling this mission in every respect. I would like to make a number of observations about current activity, focus and opportunities for future progress.

Of course, the SCH is not only one of the major thoracic surgery centers in China, it is one of the premier thoracic surgery units in the world. All of us who have visited this outstanding center have marveled at the efficiencies and expertise offered to such large number of patients with critical thoracic disease. One can easily appreciate the rationale for creating subspecialty service lines so as to focus expertise and judgement in the most experienced hands, with the patient's best interest the paramount consideration. The case volume in each of these domains is enormous and the results are equally impressive. Efficient teams applying standardized procedures and techniques results in better patient care and reduced cost. This is a global surgical challenge. A critical challenge for the future will be to carefully examine the successes and opportunities for improvement seen in each domain. These will provide opportunities for each domain to contribute in a very positive way to the overall mission of the SCH. As a global leader, the SCH is in a unique position to make major contributions in this regard.

The list of peer review publications by SCH scholars in major journals is impressive. Looking to the future, the

SCH has an opportunity to engage in more prospective single or multicenter randomized trials. Of course, these are difficult and expensive, but the patient numbers and case volume in the SCH experience represent a resource that exists in very few other centers. Another opportunity is in the area of guideline development. Thoracic surgery centers in the Western world would benefit from lessons learned from such a busy center as SHC, where like all Chinese centers, resources are much more constrained.

The SCH is recognized as one of the most important thoracic teaching centers in the world. Future annual reports might describe the number of trainees who have completed their training each year and where are they currently working. We recognize that many international visitors and trainees spend time at SCH. It would be illuminating to have this important contribution documented in the annual report. Similarly, young surgeons and trainees from SCH visit other internationally renowned centers each year, bringing back to SCH valuable experiences which enhance its programs. This investment in the future success of the SCH should also be included in future annual reports.

It has been my privilege for many years to be associated with so many outstanding thoracic surgeons from the SCH. I have learned a great deal from these interactions. In the coming years, I look forward to many exciting contributions in patient care, research and education from this outstanding institution.

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## References

1. Yao F, Wang R, Guo X, et al. Annual report of Department of Thoracic Surgery at Shanghai Chest Hospital. *Shanghai Chest* 2018;2:18.