

# Dr. Hon Chi Suen: thoracic surgery is full of unknowns—challenging surgeries

Submitted Dec 15, 2017. Accepted for publication Mar 19, 2018.

doi: 10.21037/jtd.2018.03.173

View this article at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21037/jtd.2018.03.173>

## Editor's note

On September 5, 2017, the Queen Mary Hospital (QMH) 2nd Thoracic Surgery Symposium was held at the Professional Block, Queen Mary Hospital. Experts of thoracic surgery from around the world flocked to the symposium for an in-depth exchange, and sharing of special surgical cases that they have encountered. We are honored to invite the convenor of the symposium, Dr. Hon Chi Suen (*Figure 1*), to have an interview with us on thoracic surgery.

## Expert introduction

Dr. Hon Chi Suen is one of the top experts in the field of cardiothoracic surgery. After obtaining his medical degree from the University of Hong Kong and training in cardiothoracic surgery in Hong Kong, Dr. Suen further pursued studies at Harvard University (Massachusetts General Hospital and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center) under Hermes C. Grillo, MD, Douglas J. Mathisen, MD and John C. Wain, MD, and Washington University (Barnes-Jewish Hospital) under Joel D. Cooper, MD and G. Alexander Patterson, MD. His wide scope of practice includes cardiac surgery, thoracic surgery, airway surgery, esophageal surgery, mediastinal surgery and chest wall fracture surgery. Since 2006, Dr. Suen has been the President of Center for Cardiothoracic Surgery, Inc., Saint Louis, MO, USA.

As an advocate for thoracic surgery, Dr. Suen commented that the surgery in this area is very challenging because it involves several of the most major organs in the human body. That is why he has always maintained a strong passion for cardiothoracic surgery. Looking back at 2006 when he first established the Center for Cardiothoracic Surgery, Inc. in USA, he considered it to be the “right decision to make”. Despite the difficulties of single handedly managing several teams to deal with various challenging cases, it is meaningful for him to be able to help the patients.

Dr. Suen was amazed by the rapid development of China



**Figure 1** Dr. Hon Chi Suen.

in the field of thoracic surgery over the years. Traveling often to China to exchange ideas with Chinese experts, he found that they have not only caught up with the Western standards in terms of knowledge and surgical skills, but have even exceeded in certain areas the international standard of thoracic surgery. He explained that over a decade ago, it was common to see lots of Chinese experts pursuing studies abroad. But now, many Western experts flock to China to exchange ideas and learn from the Chinese experts, who we can see are now imparting a significant influence on thoracic surgery internationally.

As an Editorial Board member of *Journal of Thoracic Disease (JTD)*, Dr. Suen gave us a blessing on the growth of *JTD*, and expected *JTD* to gain in impact factor, so more experts can pay attention to the journal, ultimately benefiting more patients.

## Interview questions

- (I) We realized that you have an outstanding experience in thoracic surgery for over 30 years, what makes you interested in thoracic surgery?
- (II) We believed that it takes much hard work to become a respectable figure. What made up your mind to establish the Center for Cardiothoracic Surgery in 2006? Is there any difficulty that you encountered?



**Figure 2** Interview with Dr. Hon Chi Suen: thoracic surgery is full of unknowns—challenging surgeries (1).

Available online: <http://www.asvide.com/article/view/25304>

- (III) Since you have travelled to China a lot and actively participated in thoracic surgery educational activities, how do you see the differences between Chinese experts and Western experts in terms of evidence-based medicine?
- (IV) As an Editorial Board member of *JTD*, can you share

your prospects of *JTD* with us?

For more details, please check out the interview video below (Figure 2).

### Acknowledgements

On behalf of the editorial office of *JTD*, we would like to extend our gratitude to Dr. Hon Chi Suen for sharing his opinion and insight with us.

### Footnote

*Conflicts of Interest:* The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

### References

1. Wong V. Interview with Dr. Hon Chi Suen: thoracic surgery is full of unknowns—challenging surgeries. *Asvide* 2018;5:560. Available online: <http://www.asvide.com/article/view/25304>

(Science Editor: Vicky Wong, *JTD*, [jtd@amepc.org](mailto:jtd@amepc.org))

**Cite this article as:** Wong V. Dr. Hon Chi Suen: thoracic surgery is full of unknowns—challenging surgeries. *J Thorac Dis* 2018;10(Suppl 16):S1918-S1919. doi: 10.21037/jtd.2018.03.173