

Editorial

Taking structured training in obstetrics and gynaecology across the border

The Hong Kong College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (HKCOG) was established in 1988 with the insight to oversee specialist training by a local professional body. The Hong Kong Academy of Medicine (HKAM), established in 1993, and its 15 constituent Colleges, including the HKCOG, oversee the maintenance of the standard of specialists practising in Hong Kong.

Back in 2006, the HKAM signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Mainland Chinese government to assist the Mainland China in developing a registration system for specialists. In 2015, an MOU on standardised specialist training was signed. Subsequently, the HKAM signed an MOU on the training of Shenzhen and Hong Kong specialists with three parties: the Shenzhen Municipal Health Commission, The University of Hong Kong, and The University of Hong Kong-Shenzhen Hospital (HKU-SZH). In 2019, the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Medical Specialist Training Center was established. After much deliberation, the Center adopted a structured specialist programme in the format of '3+4' for all specialties, with 3 years of existing national residency training programme, followed by 4 years of specialist training programme.

Before the formal establishment of the Center, HKU-SZH had already started a pilot obstetrics and gynaecology (O&G) training scheme, taking reference from the HKCOG training programme in general O&G as well as in four subspecialties: maternal and fetal medicine, urogynaecology, reproductive medicine, and gynaecology. With the establishment of the Center in 2019, the HKCOG signed an MOU with HKU-SZH to facilitate the development of a structured O&G training programme, and the programme was updated to fit into the agreed '3+4' format rather than the 6 years of specialist training in Hong Kong. The updated programme was one of the first specialist training programmes approved and adopted by the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Medical Specialist Training

Center. Currently, five hospitals in the Greater Bay Area have joined this training programme.

This training programme is based on the HKCOG training programme, with completion of logbooks, on-the-job assessments such as objective structured assessment of technical skills and case-based discussions, regular reviews with designated trainers, intermediate assessments such as the structured oral examinations, examinations similar to the Member of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists part 2 and part 3, and a final assessment similar to the HKCOG exit assessment. HKCOG is actively assisting the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Medical Specialist Training Center in providing regular 'train-the-trainer' courses to doctors from different hospitals in Shenzhen. HKCOG also provides assessors for the HKU-SZH trainees. In 2021, HKU-SZH, with assistance from HKCOG, held the first pilot structured oral examinations. In the coming months, HKCOG will assist the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Medical Specialist Training Center in conducting 'train-the-trainer' workshops and in preparing examinations similar to the Member of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists part 2 and part 3.

For more than 30 years, HKCOG has taken up the role of establishing and overseeing structured O&G training in Hong Kong. Most current practising O&G specialists are trained under this programme, which has been proved to be effective and well recognised internationally. We hope that we can bring our experience to the Greater Bay Area and play our part to support the national goal of training medical specialists to international standards.

Karen CHAN

President, Hong Kong College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists

Correspondence to: Karen CHAN

Email: kklechan@hku.hk