EDITORIAL

NEW EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBERS

We are pleased to welcome Professor Arata Azuma and Professor Kenji Eguchi from Japan, as the representatives of the Japanese Respiratory Society on the Editorial Board of *Respirology*. Please see the inside front cover for the complete list of our Board Members.

NEW REVIEW SERIES: INFECTIOUS DISEASES

We are pleased to introduce the first two reviews of our new review series: Infectious Diseases. This review series is being managed and edited by Professor Ken Tsang from Hong Kong and Professor Grant Waterer from Perth, Australia. Associate Professor Grant Waterer is head of the Infectious Disease unit in the Lung Institute of WA and his clinical activities undertaken are at the Royal Perth Hospital. He is Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of Western Australia and adjunct Associate Professor of Medicine at Northwestern University, Chicago. His research interests are in host responses to pulmonary infections and the role of genetics in influencing these responses. Professor Tsang, one of our former and very active Associate Editors, was Consultant Physician-in-charge of the Hong Kong West Cluster of Hospitals for SARS Service during the 2003 SARS outbreak. He currently holds several Academic positions in Universities in Hong Kong and is an active member of several major committees in the region. His research interests are focussed on bronchiectasis and regional issues in respiratory infections including basic and clinical aspects of host responses to pulmonary infections. He has extensively published on these topics.

The first review in the series is authored by Professor Tsang and Professor Thomas File from the North-Eastern Ohio Universities, Ohio, USA. Professor File has an extensive publication record on the topic of respiratory infections, their management and treatment. Their review 'Respiratory infections unique to Asia' focuses on the respiratory infections found particularly in Asia. Together they examine the challenges for the region particularly highlighting infections due to tropical organisms and the treatment options available but particularly with different socio-economic landscapes encountered.

The second review is by Professor Wong and Professor Yuen from Hong Kong. Professor Yuen, who graduated from Hong Kong University, is a microbiologist, surgeon and physician and heads the Department of Microbiology. In 2000, he was appointed the Scientific Co-director of the HKU-Pasteur Research Centre to set up a joint research

venture between the Institute Pasteur and The University of Hong Kong because of his expertise in the area of emerging infectious diseases. Professor Yuen played an important role during the SARS outbreak of 2003 and was involved in the discovery of the agent causing SARS, the SARS coronavirus, thus leading to measures that were crucial to containing the outbreak of this disease. He has received many awards in recognition of his work on infectious diseases and is actively involved on the Editorial Board of several medical journals. He has extensively published on the topic of novel microbes and infectious diseases. Professor Wong is Assistant Professor in the Department of Microbiology of the University of Hong Kong, Honorary Associate Consultant, Department of Microbiology, at the Queen Mary Hospital and Honorary Clinical Microbiologist, at the Ruttonjee and Tang Shiu Kin Hospital in Hong Kong. He also has an extensive publication record on infectious diseases. Their review 'Antiviral therapy for respiratory tract infections' addresses the topic of treatment options for viral respiratory infections based on the patients' condition and the type of infection and emphasizes the benefits of targeted, modulated and adapted treatments.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE

The first highlight in this issue is the original research by Dr Yin and colleagues 'Serial analysis of gene expression in a rat lung model of asthma'. These authors used serial analysis of gene expression to identify genes in lung tissues affected by asthma in a rat model in order to increase our understanding of the mechanisms involved in this disease. A number of interesting findings were made which now need confirming in clinical models.

The second highlighted manuscript is 'Bile acids induce CCN2 production through p38 MAP kinase activation in human bronchial epithelial cells: a factor contributing to airway fibrosis' by Dr Perng and colleagues. These authors demonstrated a possible mechanism by which exposure of airways to bile acids (a feature of aspiration) can lead to fibrosis. Their findings should prove useful in developing therapies for preventing and treating fibrosis in a setting of chronic aspiration.

'Reference gene selection for real-time polymerase chain reaction in human lung cells subjected to cyclic mechanical strain' by Dr Pinhu and colleagues investigated the variation of expression of 14 reference genes in different cell types subjected to cyclic mechanical strain in order to establish which reference genes should be used in which cell type and under which condition when studying gene variation in lung cells.

The next highlighted article 'Effects of inhaled fluticasone propionate on CTLA-4-positive CD4+CD25+ cells in induced sputum in mild asthmatics' by Dr Kawayama and colleagues showed that inhaled fluticasone propionate increases the percentage of CTLA-4-positive CD4+CD25+ cells as well as improving airway hyperresponsiveness. The possibility that both findings are related is raised and further studies are required to investigate this hypothesis further as it would provide some new options for treating asthma.

The next highlight is the paper 'Enhanced levels of prostaglandin E₂ and matrix metalloproteinase-2 correlate with the severity of airflow limitation in stable COPD' by Dr Chen and colleagues is a well designed study which provides more information on the molecular mechanisms involved in the pathogenesis of COPD, thereby suggesting new potential therapeutic targets for the treatment of this disease.

Hypoxaemic COPD patients often use portable oxygen therapy equipment when away from home, but whether this is necessary for driving a motor vehicle has not been investigated. In 'Acute oxygen therapy does not improve cognitive and driving performance in hypoxaemic COPD', Dr Pretto and Dr MacDonald showed that there was no improvement in driving performance in hypoxaemic patients using intranasal oxygen versus intranasal air. Using mobile

oxygen therapy equipment in a motor vehicle can be cumbersome and difficult in particular for older patients who are often those needing the therapy. The results of this study can be helpful in deciding whether or not to use oxygen for these drivers.

'Obstructive sleep apnoea and nocturnal gastroesophageal reflux are common in lung transplant patients' is what Dr Shepherd and his colleagues showed in their article. These conditions have been linked with the occurrence of bronchiolitis obliterans syndrome which is one of the major factors limiting survival in lung transplant patients. It might therefore be useful to ensure that obstructive sleep apnoea and nocturnal gastroesophageal reflux do not go undiagnosed and untreated in these patients.

The last highlight in this issue is the technical report 'A pilot study to evaluate Australian predictive equations for the impulse oscillometry system' by Dr Newbury and colleagues, which produced a preliminary set of reference data for the predictive equations for impulse oscillometry using an Australian population. Currently, there is a lack of data on this new and exciting method of assessing airway performance.

I hope you will enjoy this issue of *Respirology*.

Phil Thompson
Editor-in-Chief