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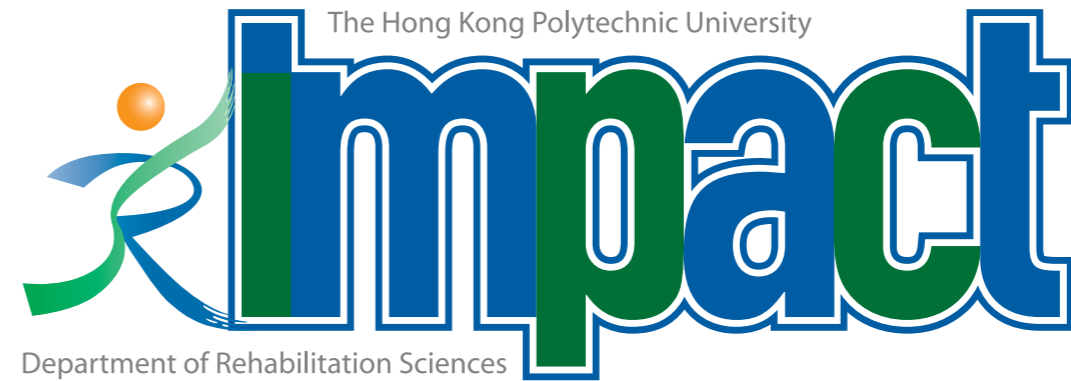
The Department of Rehabilitation Sciences (RS) has been providing high-quality internationally benchmarked entry-level education to occupational therapists and physiotherapists for 30 years. Our graduates are competent professionals serving clients in Hong Kong, Mainland China, and many other countries. We also offer excellent opportunities to practitioners and researchers to pursue further education from a disciplinary-specific or multidisciplinary perspective in rehabilitation sciences. In order to achieve its mission of providing high-quality education and mediating professional development, our Department still has a lot to do in the future. Your support is vital to facilitate this process!

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Department of Rehabilitation Sciences
Touching lives, making an impact

SPRING - SUMMER / 2013

Cover Story

The 8th Pan-Pacific Conference on Rehabilitation

Prof Marco Pang (Professor)

The Pan-Pacific Conference on Rehabilitation (PPCR), first established in 1998, is one of the signature events of our Department. Having hosted the PPCR seven times in Hong Kong, our Department was determined that the 8th PPCR be held in another Asia-Pacific country in order to enhance the impact of the conference in the international scene, and further strengthen international exchange and collaborations among students, researchers, and clinicians. Through the committed efforts of the Organizing Committee, the 8th PPCR was successfully held at the University of Santo Tomas, Manila, Philippines on Nov 17-18, 2012.

The theme of the conference was "A multi-disciplinary approach to prevention, management and rehabilitation disability". We were blessed to have Professor Marjorie Woollacott (University of Oregon, USA) and Professor Anita Bundy (University of Sydney, Australia) as our keynote speakers, both of whom are renowned scholars in their respective fields. There was also an exciting mix of plenary lectures, symposiums and free paper presentations on a wide range of topics.

We had a record number of paper submissions and over 600 participants attended the conference. Our



From left to right: Prof Jocelyn Agcaoli (University of Santo Tomas), Ms Carmen Reyes-Zubiaga (National Council on Disability Affairs, Republic of the Philippines), Dr Kenneth Fong, Prof Gabriel Ng, Ms Michelle Leung, Prof Marco Pang, Dr Celia Tan (Singapore General Hospital) participated in the ribbon-cutting during the Opening Ceremony

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Department sent 24 delegates to attend, including 18 students from various programs. Prof Hector Tsang, Dr Kenneth Fong, Dr Doris Chong and I gave well received presentations on a variety of topics. Our students also did extremely well in the paper presentation sessions. Out of the seven awards that were given out, our research



Prof Marjorie Woollacott gave an excellent presentation on postural control

students won four. Davynn Tan and Alan Liao tied for the first prize in the poster presentation category and Freddy Lam won the second prize for both the poster and oral presentation categories. The international panel of judges was composed of Prof Marjorie Woollacott, Prof Anita Bundy, Dr Sandra Saavedra (University of Michigan), Dr Celia Tan (Singapore General Hospital) and Dr Sam Chen (University of Taiwan).

I am proud to say that the conference turned out to be a huge success despite the difficulties encountered throughout the planning and preparation process. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved in organizing the conference.



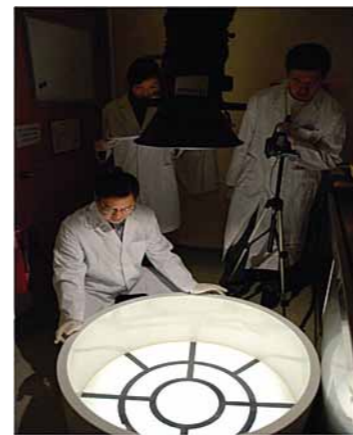
Ms Gayline Manalang (President of Philippines Physical Therapy Association), Prof Jocelyn Agcaoili and Prof Marco Pang presenting a souvenir to Prof Anita Bundy (second left)

Staff Activities

An *surprising* Finding on **LAVENDER OIL'S** Effect on **Brain Serotonin Levels** in **RATS**

Prof Hector Tsang (Professor and Associate Head)

Aromatherapy is a commonly used complementary therapy for anxiety disorders. However, the effects of lavender oil on the neurotransmitter activity that regulates emotion have not been well documented. The serotonergic system, in particular, is rarely tested in rodents. Recently, Professor Tsang and his colleagues published a research article examining the anxiolytic effects of lavender oil on the brain serotonin levels and anxiety-related behaviours of rats. Their



Professor Tsang and his colleagues investigated the behaviours of rats using the Open Field Model

study attempted to explore the effect of lavender oils on the level of serotonin and the corresponding anxiolytic behavioural effects in rats, testing three main hypotheses. First, that inhalation of lavender oil would be associated with increased brain serotonin levels in rats' prefrontal cortex and striatum. Second, the inhalation of lavender oil would produce anxiolytic effects in rats similar to chlordiazepoxide (CDP). Third, the inhalation of lavender oil would augment the effect of CDP. The experimental rats were divided into five groups, which respectively received inhalations of saline, 1.25% lavender oil, 2.5% lavender oil, CDP and 2.5% lavender oil co-administered with CDP. Anxiety was induced in the rats using animal models including the Elevated Plus Maze and Open Field. The levels of serotonin in the rats' pre-frontal cortex and striatum, the anxiolytic effects of lavender oil and its augmentation effect

when co-administered with CDP were evaluated. The study provided preliminary evidence that inhalation of 1.25% w/w or 2.5% w/w lavender oil for 90 minutes stimulated synthesis of serotonin in the prefrontal cortex approximated to the effects of CDP. This serves as a plausible neurobiological mechanism that explains the anxiolytic effects of lavender oil. Furthermore, the study showed that co-administration of CDP with 2.5% lavender oil augmented the effect of CDP in up-regulating serotonin levels in the prefrontal cortex and striatum. However, these up-regulatory effects of brain serotonin did not completely transfer to the reduction of anxiety behaviours in the EPM and Open Field. Further studies are needed to see if factors such as the dose of lavender oil inhaled, the experiment period, and the sample size may have caused the insignificant behavioural change in the rats.



Rats with experimentally induced anxiety were tested using the Elevated Plus Maze

Second Prize for National Science and Technology Progress

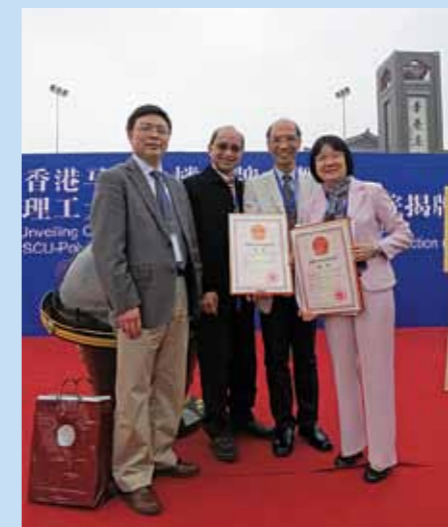
Prof Cecilia Li (Professor)

It is a great honour for both PolyU and me to be awarded the second prize for National Science and Technology Progress, issued by the state council (國務院), the highest



administrative department of China. This award is currently the highest award in Chinese scientific fields, intended to appreciate eminent scientists, universities and research institutes which make a prominent contribution in various fields. All the awardees are invited to attend the annual ceremony held in the People's Great Hall in Beijing to receive the award, which is presented by the President and Premier of China.

Last year, PolyU and I had the opportunity to collaborate with Prof Huang Yaosheng (黃躍生), a prestigious burn surgeon from the Institute of Burn Research of No.3 Military Medical School (重慶第三軍醫大學全軍燒傷研究所), Chongqing, to conduct research on early rehabilitation in burn patients. It was for this



collaboration that PolyU and I were given the second prize.

Every year there are a huge number of burn incidents in China, but there is a lack of standardized burn rehabilitation. Currently I am continuing my efforts in burn research by collaborating with Chengdu No.2 Hospital and the Institute of Burn Research at No.3 Military Medical University of Chongqing, conducting a multi-centre research project into the effect of pressure therapy for burn patients in the early stage.

This award was a remarkable inspiration not only for my efforts in promoting the establishment of a standardized burn rehabilitation team in China, but also for domestic burn

professionals to gain a greater awareness of the importance of early rehabilitation for patients.

Our graduates, our outstanding alumni!

Prof David Man (Professor)

Mr Michael Tsui Kam-fai, a graduate of the Professional Diploma in Occupational Therapy in 1991, received The Outstanding PolyU Alumni Award on 18 April 2013. As one of seven awardees, he was honoured for his remarkable professional achievements and significant contributions to his alma mater and the community.

Being one of Michael's former teachers, I was delighted to share his joy and the recognition of his achievement during the Award Ceremony, together with more than 400 guests comprising senior officials, the University's Court and Council members, friends and supporters from industry, alumni and staff members.



Mr Michael Tsui gives a speech in the Award Ceremony

Michael is now the CEO of Deltason Medical Ltd. and Rehab-Robotics Co. Ltd. He is an outstanding entrepreneur who has established two companies developing innovative and technologically advanced medical devices for the healthcare sector. An occupational therapist by training, we have witnessed his tremendous efforts to spearhead new technologies in the field of medical devices by introducing high-quality rehabilitation systems to Hong Kong. We look forward to continuing to work with Michael and to his continued support of our research and development for the benefit of people with disabilities.



Mr Michael Tsui (3rd from left) receiving the congratulations of Prof Tong, President (2nd from left), Prof David Man (1st from left), Dr Andy Cheng (1st from right) and friends

Student's Activities

The 8th Pan-Pacific Conference on REHABILITATION

Timothy Yam (MPT student)

Attending the 8th PPCR was definitely an eye-opening experience. The program provided at the University of Santo Tomas gave me the opportunity to understand my role, as a physiotherapist, in rehabilitating people with disability. The studies presented at the conference updated me on the most recent approaches and interventions. It was my pleasure to watch Professor Marjorie Woollacott's presentation and learn more about sitting balance in children with cerebral palsy. This conference made me realize how important a multi-disciplinary approach is, and that one should treat patients in a holistic



Timothy Yam (1st from left) enjoys the conference dinner together with other students and Dr Doris Chong (centre)

way. This was further reinforced by group sharing sessions with a wide variety of health professionals. Sharing different perspectives enables one to reflect and improve on one's practice. Although I wasn't able to attend the whole conference, I grasped the most important messages and aspects delivered, which will certainly benefit my practice as a physiotherapist in the future. Attending the 8th PPCR was a valuable experience which re-iterated the importance of using a holistic approach as a health care provider.

of using a holistic approach as a health care provider.

Chan Tsz Yan, Yvonne (MOT student)

The trip to Manila for the 8th PPCR was truly an influential and memorable experience for us. We were honoured as the first ever batch of MOT students to participate in this inspiring event co-organized by the University of Santo Tomas and the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Though it was only a brief weekend stay in the Philippines in the middle of our placement, we enjoyed it and brought back precious knowledge with us.

Throughout the two-day conference there was a variety of topics across the fields of OT and PT, allowing us excellent opportunities for exchanges of knowledge and experience. Presentations were given by professors, professionals and research students from UST, PolyU and other Asian countries; these sessions were so incredible that we wished we had had time to attend more. It was also a fantastic opportunity to meet with professionals and other students, sharing and learning from different perspectives, and enriching ourselves with invaluable opinions. We even made good use of our mealtimes for fruitful discussions!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the co-organizers, UST and the Department of RS at PolyU, for



Yvonne Chan (1st from left, 2nd row) makes friend with the students from other countries at the conference

making this event so successful and fulfilling. Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the host institution for their friendliness and hospitality, making my journey warm and unforgettable.

Inclusive Design Contest of Technical Aids

Chan Wing Yan, Chow Wai Lok Lawrence, Ng Cheuk Kiu and Tsang Shiu Wai (Year 3 Physiotherapy Students)

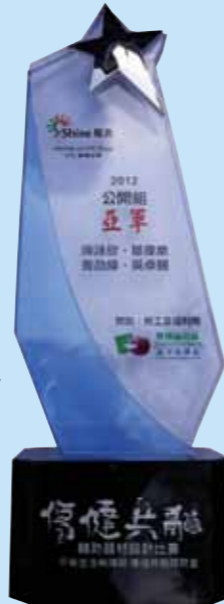
We are so pleased to receive the second runner up prize at the Inclusive Design Contest of Technical Aids for People with Disabilities held by the Shine Skills Centre. This award is extremely encouraging and meaningful for us as it represents not only our effort, but also our hope to increase the functional level of disabled people with our invention. Although our invention is not commonly used in the community, we hope it can inspire others.

Our inspiration came from a lecture on the features of people with Parkinson's disease. They often have features

of gait disturbance: they may freeze and thus have problems initiating movements; they also have a "shuffling gait" with small steps and a stiff trunk. These difficulties affect their functional mobility in performing normal activities. However, some research has found that their walking patterns can be improved by using visual and auditory

cues – so we wondered whether we could make use of these cues. The issue we had to address was how to carry the cues along with the patient and we found that we could merge them with their walking aids, like rollators. Thus, after consulting Dr Kenneth Fong for his valuable advice, we started to work on our invention, Rollator PS.

It is undeniable that forming a new idea is really difficult. However, we believe that inspiration usually comes from observation. So, being open-minded and creative is the key to jumping out of your traditional mindset.



News

Promotion

We would like to congratulate the following staff for their promotion:

- Prof Gladys Cheing promoted to Professor
- Prof Marco Pang promoted to Professor
- Prof Ella Yeung promoted to Professor
- Ms Sharon Tsang promoted to Senior Clinical Associate
- Ms Rebecca Wong promoted to Senior Clinical Associate
- Ms Emily Sin promoted to Clinical Associate

WELCOME to Our NEW Colleagues

- Dr Eric Tsang, Research Associate Professor
- Dr Wayne Chan, Clinical Associate
- Ms Josephine Wong, Clinical Associate
- Miss Cherie Cheung, Clerk
- Miss Joyce Wong, Technical Assistant
- Miss Ruby Wong, Clerk

We wish to bid FAREWELL to

Mr Kayan Leung, Executive Officer

Impact Editors' Corner

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Visitors

7 Mar 2013



Visit by Dr Jackie Hammerton, Sheffield Hallam University, UK

13 Mar 2013



Visit by the students of St Paul Co-educational College

13 Apr 2013



Visit by 廣東省人力資源和社會保障廳

18 - 19 Apr 2013



Visit by Prof Chukuka Entwemeka and Prof Tony Wright

22 - 24 Apr 2013



Visit by Prof Di Newham, Cost Centre Consultant, RAE

29 May 2013



Visit by the delegates of Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand