

The Chronological Track of Contemporary Development of Rehabilitation Medicine in China

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While the 2013 ISPRM World Congress Chooses Beijing China as its venue, Chinese colleagues in rehabilitation medicine (RM) feel especially honoured and happy, looking back at the past three decades of hard working in advancing the new specialty in China. In this article I would like to outline the step by step progress of rehabilitation medicine in chronological order, with a hope that the readers might find the impetus of this progress and some characteristics of medical rehabilitation in this rising oriental developing country.

1982

The Beginning of Contemporary RM in China

- Prof. H.A. Rusk and his team from WRF, USA visited China, introducing rehabilitation medicine as a new specialty to the Chinese medical authority and professionals.
- In November and December, invited by Prof. Rusk and WRF, a Chinese delegation in a studying tour to USA attending a special course on RM in IRM, New York and visited the top RM centers in Washington DC, Cleveland, Chicago, Bethesda and San Francisco.
- In June the Chinese first University-based Department of Rehabilitation Medicine was founded in Sun Yat-sen University of Medical Sciences.

1983

Encouragement from WHO Disability and Rehabilitation Office

- In September and October, Dr. J.Krol, Chief officer from WHO Disability and Rehabilitation Office, visited Shijiazhuang and Guangzhou, introducing the CBR (community-base rehabilitation) new approach and urged China to conduct CBR program.
- Sponsored by the Ministry of Health, PRC and approved by the Chinese Science-Technology Committee,

The Chinese Association of Rehabilitation Medicine (CARM) was founded in April 1983.

- The first training course of RM was conducted by Sun Yat-sen University of Medical Sciences

1984

In December the CARM held the First National Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine in Shijiazhuang City.

1985

Prof. Satoshi Ueda, the Japanese famous scholar in RM was invited by MOH, PRC to visit China and give lectures in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, including giving a series of lectures on neurorehabilitation to the Chinese young rehabilitation physicians at a National Training Course in RM at Guangzhou.

1986

The Start of CBR Program in China

- In March working on a special program in collaboration with WHO, the Sun Yat-sen University of Medical Sciences (SUMS) in Guangzhou China started an urban CBR pilot project in Jin Hua street, Guangzhou.
- In August, WHO conducted a workshop on Rehabilitation Management in Hong Kong and the Philippines especially for the Chinese CBR program leaders. The faculty consisted of Dr E. Helander, Dr Moday from WHO and Prof. Harry SY Fang from Hong Kong WHO Collaborating Centre.
- In October, in collaboration with WHO, the National Workshop on CBR was held in Guangzhou with Ms. E Mendi, a WHO consultant, as workshop chairperson. The Workshop was quite successful in training the participants across the country to start the CBR projects in their local communities.

1987

- In July WHO designated the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine SUMS as a WHO Collaborating Centre for Rehabilitation.
- Workshops on Occupational Therapy and Rehabilitation Counseling were held in Guangzhou with invited guest faculty from Australia—Ms J Ranka and Mr Ron Smith.

1988

- The largest rehabilitation center in China, ie.The China Rehabilitation Research Center (CRRC) with 300 beds and comprehensive facilities and staff was officially inaugurated in Beijing and opened to service.
- The First Rehabilitation Medicine Textbook in China was published to meet the need of the undergraduate students in clinical medicine major who registered in studying the course of RM. In China there were 23 colleges offered the RM course in 1988.

1989

To encourage and to urge the setting up and improvement of department of rehabilitation medicine in general hospitals,the Ministry of Health,PRC set out a policy that the Level 3(higher grade) general hospitals are required to set up the department of rehabilitation medicine with both outpatient and inpatient facilities and services, while the Level 2(intermediate grade) general hospital are required to set up the department of rehabilitation medicine with at least the outpatient facilities and service, the policy served as a criteria or standard in assessing and accrediting the general hospitals,thus, resulting in a considerable growth of rehabilitation facilities in general hospitals.

1990

Prof Fang's Training Program to Enhance Manpower Resources in Rehabilitation Therapy

- Starting from 1989 through 1991,Prof. Harry Fang,Director of WHOCC for Rehabilitation in Hong Kong, initiated a one-year intensive course training program endorsed by MOH PRC, with a purpose of enhancing rehabilitation manpower in China, including those working on CBR.The program was offered in Wuhan and Hefei and turned out to be a remarkable success with over 300 graduates working across China.
- The influential, voluminous and comprehensive textbook entitled “China’s Rehabilitation Medicine” was published

in Beijing by Hua Xia Publishers.

1991

In June China hosted an Inter-country Workshop on Planning and Management of CBR Programs held in Guangzhou. The workshop was sponsored by WHO/WPRO. The Chinese urban CBR model-the Jin Hua Street experience was explored and reviewed by the workshop participants.

1992

- A pilot program of training PT/OT students in China succeeded in turning out a group of university-based graduates. Sixteen PT/OT candidates have finished a 5-year course (full time) at SUMS Guangzhou and earned a bachelor degree.
- In September Mr. Deng Pufang,chairman of the Chinese Disabled Persons' Federation received the Henry Kessler Award offered by the Rehabilitation International for his outstanding contribution to promote the equal participation and integration with society for the people with disabilities.

1993

Increasing Exchange with Foreign Experts

- In August,an American Delegation of Physical Therapist visited China.
- In April,a group of Russian experts on rehabilitation visited China.

1994—1996

The Specialty of RM Has Been Recognized and Standardized

- The MOH,PRC has classified the speciality of rehabilitation medicine as a clinical specialty.
- The MOH,PRC has established professional standards and minimum requirements for the Level 3 and Level 2 general hospitals on the facilities, equipments and services, thus, resulting in the significant improvement of quality service of medical rehabilitation.

1997

Academic Assistance from Hong Kong and Overseas

- The Hong Kong Polytechnic University organized a delegation composed of rehabilitation sciences experts to visit mainland China looking for possibility of cooperation with universities in faculty development,education and re-

search in areas of rehabilitation therapy and sciences.

- In August, the CARM organized a delegation to attend the 8th World Congress of IRMA (International Rehabilitation Medicine Association) held in Kyoto. The delegation made extensive contacts in the congress with overseas experts exploring the opportunity for academic co-operation.

1998

- Rehabilitation Therapy (PT,OT,ST) Subcommittee of CARM inaugurated and conducted its first national symposium.
- The American Delegation on Pain Rehabilitation led by Prof. M.Grabois visited China.

1999

In November a Chinese expert, Prof. D.Zhuo, was invited by AAPMR as a lecturer to attend the 61th American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Annual Assembly and give a lecture on the topic of "Community-based rehabilitation: Experience in China".

2000

The start of Industrial Injury Rehabilitation

Sponsored by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, PRC. The Guangzhou Industrial Rehabilitation Center officially inaugurated. Soon it became a National Base of Industrial Rehabilitation (IR) with a network of IR institutions in various provinces of China.

2001

The Breakthrough of PT,OT Education

The Ministry of Education, PRC, endorsed the setting up of the professional education program of rehabilitation therapy as a university-based 4-year course leading to a degree of Bachelor of Science. A pilot program was inaugurated at the Beijing Capital Medical University in collaboration with the China Rehabilitation Research Center.

2002

In support of the development of PT,OT education, a National Survey on the Manpower Need and Job Responsibility of PT,OT in China was conducted by the Education Committee of CARM with the endorsement by MOH, PRC.

2003

Residency Training of Physiatrists on the way Coming

of Age

China has set up a series of documents and regulations to accredit 17 clinical specialties (rehabilitation medicine included) for specialty physicians training in China, and to develop a curriculum to meet the minimum requirements for the specialty training/residency training of rehabilitation medicine, an important step toward the standards of international practice (entry level training for physiatrists).

2004

The National PT,OT Education Survey starting from 2002 showed that the shortage of manpower of OT&PT is obvious, with only 5640 PT,OT in 2002, while the projection need comes to 35210 in 2010. An urgent and effective development of PT&OT education is strongly recommended.

2005

"The White Paper on Education of Rehabilitation Therapy in China" was launched by CARM Education Committee, describing the job responsibilities of PT&OT, the gaps of manpower need of PT & OT, the entry level criteria for the schools preparing to offer PT,OT program and the recommendation for education reformation. The White Paper serves as a brief Guidelines for the management of PT and OT education.

2006

Towards a System of Certification of Physiatrists in China

- A comprehensive system on the training and certification for physiatrists (rehabilitation physicians) was proposed to MOH, PRC by CARM and the Chinese Society of Rehabilitation Physicians (CSR).
- The criteria for being accredited as a base or location for physiatrist residency training program (a 3-year program) was proposed by CSR and approved by MOH.

2007

Expansion of PT,OT Education Programs

- According to a 2007 statistics, a considerable expansion of education programs for rehabilitation therapy was seen, covering 47 universities in 18 provinces and the cities of Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin. Among them 21 western style medical universities, 12 traditional Chinese medical universities.

- A complete series of textbooks, 19 in number, have been compiled and published for the rehab therapy education programs.

2008

Earthquake: Test and Alert for Rehab Service

- Chinese professionals in medical rehabilitation have play an active role in acute care and functional rehabilitation for the injured in the May 12 Sichuan earthquake. They also made contribution in the reconstruction of the rehab network in the disaster region, working along with the Hong Kong "Stand Tall" Project headed by Prof.K.M. Chan. Through the cooperation our colleagues in many cities of mainland China have gained new experience about organizing effective orthopedic rehabilitation with better allocation of resources and a long-term plan to assist the growth of local rehab manpower.
- The Big Earthquake has released signals to alert the authority to enhance the overall capacity building of medical rehabilitation in China.

2009

Speeding up PT,OT Education into the International Track

- With the assistance from various international organizations, such as WFOT(World Federation of Occupational Therapist),WCPT(World Confederation of Physical Therapy), NMA(Norwegian Missionary Alliance) and also from HKPU(Hong Kong University of Polytechnic), PT, OT education in China had been speeding up on the way turning to the international track. The following changes have been noticed, separation of two disciplines,PT,OT, designing new curricula aiming at the international standards, development of qualified teaching faculty, adopting the more effective teaching methodology.
- In September,the OT education program of the Capital Medical University has gained program accreditation with the WFOT.

2010

A statistics shows that in 2009~2010, China has 3288 rehabilitation institutions, including rehabilitation centers, rehabilitation hospitals and department of rehabilitation medicine in general hospitals ; The total number of rehab professionals amounts to 26654, including 14131 rehab physi-

cians ,12523 rehab therapists.

2011

- In April,MHO.PRC issued "National Guidelines for Professional Standards and Management of the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine in General Hospitals", For first time,the technique of EMG and clinical neurological electrophysiology examination are included as procedures in rehabilitation diagnosis and evaluation.
- The CSRP(Chinese Society of Rehabilitation Physicians) set up 7 subspecialties of rehabilitation medicine, namely, neurological rehabilitation, spinal cord injury rehabilitation, bone and joint rehabilitation, cardio-pulmonary rehabilitation, geriatric rehabilitation, pediatric rehabilitation, pain rehabilitation.
- The OT education program at Kunming Medical University gained program accreditation with WFOT.

2012

The MHO,PRC has Established and Published the Basic Standards for Rehabilitation Hospitals

- The PT entry-level program at Kunming Medical University and Sichuan University gained program accreditation with the WCPT.
- According to a 2012 statistics, the growth of community-based rehabilitation institutions and resources centers is remarkable with 15,000 service offices and 186,000 CBR stations.
- "China's Guidelines for Stroke Rehabilitation" was published and launched by a joint project committee in China.
- The Chinese Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine celebrates its 27th anniversary. In the meantime, the Journal (CJRM) was designated by ISPRM with the status as "A Journal Published in Association with ISPRM"

2013

- The 7th World Congress of International Society of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine is held in Beijing, with the ISPRM president-elect Prof. Li Jianan as the Congress President. The first time for China to host such an important and most influential world congress of PRM.
- The publication and launch of the "National Guidelines for PT, OT Education in China" represents the milestone progress striving for turning into international track and standards.