



Newsletter April 2008 Issue

Lighting the Way to A Cure

ChinaSCINet and HKSCIFund

In September 2004, the University of Hong Kong Spinal Cord Injury Fund (HKU-SCI Fund) was born, and the China Spinal Cord Injury Network (ChinaSCINet) was also established in partnership with the HKU-SCI Fund. Out of this collaboration, in June 2006, two non-profit companies, the China Spinal Cord Injury Network (ChinaSCINet) Company Limited and the Hong Kong Spinal Cord Injury Fund (HKSCIFund) Limited (formerly the 'HKU-SCI Fund'), were established. They are dedicated to running the clinical trials and to raising funds for the trials respectively.

The HKSCIFund Ltd. is a registered charitable organization in Hong Kong (Registered Charity Number: 918370). The function of the HKSCIFund is to support the ChinaSCINet.

The China Spinal Cord Injury Network is the largest spinal cord injury clinical trial network in the world, comprising more than 20 leading spinal cord injury centers in Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. It has been established to develop and test the most promising therapies for spinal cord injury and aims at accelerating movement of therapies from laboratory to clinic.

Study Progress

ChinaSCINet holds training workshops twice per year. We have conducted over a dozen training workshops in standardized neurological examinations, double-blind randomized clinical trials and preclinical studies since establishment. ChinaSCINet organizes the International Spinal Cord Injury Treatments & Trials (ISCITT) Symposium every one or two years, to showcase the achievements and discuss the problems in preclinical studies and clinical trials of spinal cord injuries.

ChinaSCINet began a multicentre observational study in October 2005 to collect the spinal cord injured patients outcome data from 17 hospitals in Mainland China and Hong Kong. This serves to establish a solid foundation for the Net to perform clinical trials for testing new SCI therapies following international standards and guidelines. The study was completed by the end of 2007.

An extensional observational trial has started in 2007 involving seven new centers in Mainland China and Taiwan.

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In May 2007, ChinaSCINet started Phase 1 clinical trial at the University of Hong Kong and MacLehose Medical Rehabilitation Center to assess the safety and pharmacokinetics of oral lithium in twenty patients with chronic spinal cord injury has completed in December 2007, showing that a 6-week course of oral lithium carbonate does not cause significant adverse events in 20 patients.

ChinaSCINet plans to start two clinical trials in 2008. Phase 2 lithium trial, a double blind randomized placebo-controlled trial, will assess the lithium effect in 40 subjects with chronic spinal cord injury. The study will investigate if lithium alone has beneficial effects on neurological recovery in spinal cord injury. Another study is umbilical cord blood mononuclear cell transplants Phase 2 trial. The trial will establish the feasibility, safety and possible efficacy of transplanting cord blood mononuclear cells into chronic spinal cord injury patients.

ChinaSCINet plans to assess the therapeutic effect of umbilical cord blood mononuclear cell transplant combining with oral lithium for subjects with chronic spinal cord injury.

The Network

The Network expanded from 7 nodes to 13 nodes since establishment. With the setup of five new nodes in Chongqing, Fuzhou, Shantou, Taiwan and Tianjin, the ChinaSCINet currently consists of 13 nodes that include 23 hospitals/ institutions.

Training Workshops & Open House

Training has been a primary mission of ChinaSCINet since established in 2004. To provide the training, ChinaSCINet has held 2-3 workshops annually and two international symposia since 2004. In 2007, two workshops were held in March and December in Kunming and Fuzhou, China respectively, with the participation of scientists and investigators from USA, New Zealand, Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Investigator Workshop on Cell Transplantation Methods for Chronic Spinal Cord Injured Patients, Mar 2 - 4, 2007

An investigator workshop was held in Kunming, China in March 2007. Over 60 investigators joined the meeting to discuss the methodology for transplanting cells in the spinal cord. 6 surgical teams tried the proposed cell transplantation method to the spinal cord of two monkeys. The consensus is reached on the method of cell transplantation to spinal cord.



Workshop on Neurological Assessment of Spinal Cord Dysfunction Training & Clinical Trial Updates, Dec 9-11, 2007



On December 9-11, 2007, we held a workshop in Fuzhou bring Dr. John Ditunno from Jefferson Medical University in Philadelphia to train 60 participants to do the neurological and functional assessment of spinal cord injury including ASIA, WISCI, FIM and SCIM, ie the outcome measures for the spinal cord injured clinical trial. In addition, over 15 researchers and clinicians have reported their recent clinical studies and animal experimental results. Over 90

investigators from Mainland, Taiwan, HK, US and New Zealand attended the workshop.

● Open House – Meeting with Spinal Cord Injured Patients and Families, 11 December 2007

ChinaSCINet and HKSCIFund held an Open House Event in Fuzhou in December 2007. It was our first Open House meeting the spinal cord injured patients and families, to update them the ChinaSCINet activities and discussing the issues of their concern. Over 20 spinal cord injured patients and families have attend the Open House.

HKSCIFund Fundraising Activities

● Mission Hills Cup Charity Gala (9 and 11 August 2007)

To raise fund for the HKSCIFund, the Mission Hills Cup Charity Gala Dinner “The Wonderful Night with Barcelona” was held at the Grand Hyatt Grand Ballroom on 9th August 2007 and the Mission Hills Cup football match was held on 11st August 2007. The Charity Gala Dinner raised over HK\$940,000.

The Mission Hills Cup was one of the biggest international football match in Hong Kong featuring FC Barcelona with star players such as World Footballer of The Year – Ronaldinho, World Cup stars Henry, Deco, Eto’o, Iniesta and many other household names. They played against the Mission Hills Invitation XI formed by players from Hong Kong champions Kitchee FC and Happy Valley FC at the Hong Kong Stadium on 11th August 2007. Brochures of the match sold during the match raised over HK\$20,000.



● TV Variety Show (2 February 2008)



Shelly Lee Lai-kuen (李麗娟女士) officiated the ceremony.

In order to promote the awareness of spinal cord injury and to raise funds for the HKSCIFund, a live Variety Show was held at TVB Jade from 8:30pm to 10pm on 2nd February 2008. Phone-in donation was available during the Variety Show. With the support of TVB and Mr. Stephen Chow (周星馳先生), film stars of Mr. Chow's new film "Chang Jiang 7" (長江七號), many famous artists and singers performed during the show. Moreover, superstar Mr. Jackie Chan (成龍先生) also appealed for the HKSCIFund. Dr. the Hon. York Chow Yat-ngok, SBS, JP (周一嶽局長), Dr. the Hon. Leong Che-hung, GBS, JP (梁智鴻醫生), Dr. Ko Wing-man, JP (高永文醫生) and Ms.

● The Year of Jacky Cheung World Tour 07 - Hong Kong Grand Finale (3 February 2008)

With the support of Mr. Jacky Cheung (張學友先生), part of the proceeds from the concert tickets of the "The Year of Jacky Cheung World Tour 07 - Hong Kong Grand Finale" on 3rd February was donated to the HKSCIFund.





CHINASCINET
中國脊髓損傷研究協作組



Forthcoming Events

ChinaSCINet will organize a workshop and a symposium in 2008. Detailed information will be released through our website (<http://www.chinascinet.org>).

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| 9/5-12/5/2008 | Spinal Cord Injury Research Methods Workshop, Xi'an, China |
| 30/10 – 1/11/2008 | The 3rd International Spinal Cord Injury Treatments & Trials Symposium, Beijing, China |

Support Us

Our target is to raise US\$2 million per year to support the ChinaSCINet's activities and to fund its on-going and future clinical trials. We are seeking your help to support our clinical trials and activities, to bring hope to the spinal cord injured patients and families.

Donation methods:

- Deposit to the HKSCIFund's Hang Seng Bank account: 773-515747-668
- Send crossed cheque payable to the 'Hong Kong Spinal Cord Injury Fund Limited' (Address: Room 803, Asia Orient Tower, 33 Lockhart Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong)
- Online donation (www.hkscifund.org)
- Donation Hotline: (852)2866-0809

Tax-deductible receipts will be issued for donations over HK\$100.

“The establishment of China Spinal Cord Injury Network is to bring promising therapies for spinal cord injury from laboratory to people”

China SCI Network
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