

## Preface

# Clinical nutrition as a conduit and recipient of health and economic development in the Asia Pacific region

Mark L Wahlqvist MD<sup>1</sup> and Duo Li MD<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Asia Pacific Health & Nutrition Centre, Monash Asia Institute, Monash University, Australia

<sup>2</sup>Department of Food Science & Nutrition, Zhejiang University, 268 Kaixuan Road, Hangzhou 310029, China

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Food systems and their health and economic outcomes are changing rapidly, whether locally, regionally or internationally.<sup>1,2,3</sup>

This poses particular challenges to clinicians and public health personnel, the two not necessarily or even desirably separate.<sup>3,4</sup>

The recent International Conference on Clinical Nutrition in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, China, endeavoured to canvass these issues. It did so in the midst of unprecedented economic growth amongst Chinese speaking peoples. The fact that many of the papers came from these same people signals a new era in Food and Nutrition Science, especially amongst an evolving younger generation of young scientists, clinicians and public health workers.

At the time of the meeting, there was often a lack of appreciation of how the new ideas and lines of enquiry were converging or diverging, being reductionist or integrative, being socially or medically relevant or counter-productive. As it turns out, in these proceedings, relevance and direction, as well as inspiration for the future have emerged and crystallised. The proceedings will stand as a statement and reference point for this shift in the affairs of nutrition science.

There were many papers which set a new direction, amongst them that of Yun-Hwa Peggy Hsieh<sup>4</sup> which looked critically at emerging technologies which would affect the food supply with greater or lesser risk. It was inescapable that questions of affordability and sustainability will increasingly influence clinical and public health nutrition.

The conference assembled a relatively young, enthusiastic and participatory audience of food technologists, nutrition scientists, clinicians and public health workers who will form new alliances and change the shape of regional and international nutrition and health.<sup>2</sup>

Almost a thousand years ago, in the Southern Sung Dynasty, Hangzhou was an innovator in textiles, food and trade, with a reputation for scholarship and leadership.<sup>1</sup> We experienced a resurgence of this during October 15-18th 2006 at Zhejiang University and in the City of Hangzhou.

Corresponding Author: Mark L Wahlqvist

### Reference

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