

Prof. Hiran Fernando: interaction between peers is important

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Founded in July, 2016, the Asia Society of Thoracic Surgeons (ASTS) recently gathered numerous experts from different international thoracic associations, like American Association of Thoracic Surgeons (AATS), Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS), European Association of Cardiothoracic Surgeons (EACTS), International Society of Minimally Invasive Cardiothoracic Surgery (ISMICS), Canadian Association of Thoracic Surgeons (CATS), etc., together to have an active and aspiring discussion and sharing about the better development of ASTS. During this time, the Editorial Office of *Journal of Visualized Surgery (JOVS)* seized the opportunity to have an interview with Prof. Hiran Fernando, a member of the Board of Directors of the International Society of Minimally Invasive Cardiothoracic Surgery (ISMICS) (Figure 1). In addition Prof. Fernando serves on the Executive Committee for the General Thoracic Club based in North America.

As the director of ISMICS, Prof. Fernando introduced some of his idea about how the society realizes its slogan on “innovation, technologies, and techniques in cardiothoracic and cardiovascular surgery”, which is worth of learning for a new society.

During the interview, Prof. Fernando also mentioned about some of the challenges that ASTS will face in the future, like differences in culture, languages, and different pathway for treating patients, etc. To deal with all these challenges, Prof. Fernando emphasized the importance of a mission statement for ASTS. Prof. Fernando also told us what would be his considerations for a prospective member thinking about joining a society—for example the quality of society meeting, the opportunity to network, whether this would be helpful for the practice, etc. A key consideration, Prof. Fernando thought was that interaction between surgeons is essential.

Other than sharing his thoughts about the organization of a society, Prof. Fernando also shared with us his perspective about a hot topic, artificial intelligence. Prof. Fernando thought it could not be applied in the medical field yet and mentioned that development in robotics will likely be the next area of development in the thoracic field.



Figure 1 Picture with Prof. Fernando.



Figure 2 Prof. Hiran Fernando: interaction between peers is important (1). Available online: <http://www.asvide.com/articles/1260>

Compared to artificial intelligence, Prof. Fernando insisted that the human component—controlling any robotic technology is still very important, and he remains optimistic about future development in this arena.

At the end of the interview, Prof. Fernando openly shared with us his method to get updated with latest progress—reviewing literature, websites, as well as attending meetings. Prof. Fernando also shared a short story about his exciting adoption of uniportal surgery.

For more details, why not click the following video (Figure 2).

Interview questions

- ❖ We know that you're a director for the International Society for Minimally Invasive Cardiothoracic Surgery (ISMICS). The slogan of ISMICS is "innovation, technologies, and techniques in cardiothoracic and cardiovascular surgery". Here would you like to tell us some idea about how ISMICS is run to realize this?
- ❖ Today's discussion is about the development of ASTS. So in your opinion, what challenges will ASTS face in the future and what would be your advice?
- ❖ Many new thoracic associations are coming out. Then when you're thinking about joining a new society, what would be your consideration?
- ❖ Speaking of technology, here I would like ask something about the artificial intelligence. Previously AlphaGo is quite a hot topic, and also recently HBO has presented a famous drama named *West World*, which is also about the artificial intelligence. Then in your opinion, what aspects in the medical center that you think artificial intelligence could be applied? With the fast development of science technology, do you think artificial intelligence could someday replace the role of surgeon?
- ❖ In your spare time, what'll you do to get yourself keep pace with the world development and update with the latest progress?

Expert Introduction

Prof. Hiran C Fernando is Professor and Chief of the Division of Thoracic Surgery at Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts, USA. He is a Fellow of the American

College of Surgeons and of the Royal Colleges of Surgeons of England and Edinburgh.

He has a clinical interest in minimally invasive approaches for lung and esophageal diseases and has led several multicenter clinical trials that have focused on therapies for high-risk patients with non-small cell lung cancer. He has also served on guidelines writing committees for the STS, ISMICS and ACCP

Prof. Fernando serves on the Executive Committee of the General Thoracic Club and as a Director for the International Society for Minimally Invasive Cardiothoracic Surgery. In addition to the *Journal of Thoracic Disease (JTD)*, he serves on the Editorial Board for the *Annals of Thoracic Surgery* and as an Associate Editor for *Diseases of the Esophagus*.

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Footnote

Conflicts of Interest: The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

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