

K.B. Woo Memorial Lecture Speaker



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Biography

Marion Edwards studied optometry in Scotland and worked in private and hospital practice in the United Kingdom and Kenya. She moved to Hong Kong in 1981 and, after a short period in private practice, was appointed Senior Lecturer at the then Hong Kong Polytechnic. She was responsible for the development of a three-year optometry program (which commenced in 1984). The rapidly expanding optometry team subsequently proposed and developed a four-year degree program (which commenced in 1990). She led the optometry programs from 1984 until 1995, at which time she was appointed Head of Department.

Prof. Edwards' main research field was myopia. After her period as Head of Department, she became Director of the Centre for Myopia Research at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

She holds a master's degree and a doctorate from the University of Bradford in the United Kingdom.

APOC: a vital resource for the Asia Pacific region ---- its development and future

Abstract

The Asia Pacific Optometric Congress has been providing continuing professional education in this region for over 30 years. During that time, its character has changed, reflecting changes in the maturity and confidence of the profession in this part of the world. Initially, a significant proportion of speakers were from other regions of the world, although Australia in our own region has always had a high profile. The majority of speakers now are from the Asia Pacific region, and at every Congress it seems a new country discovers the benefits of contributing to APOC. Over 300 speakers from 27 countries and territories have delivered papers at the first 16 APOC meetings, and it is particularly encouraging to see speakers from countries such as China, India and Korea nowadays. Some have spoken at many meetings, while others have attended just once. In this paper, I examine what individuals from different countries and territories hope to get from speaking at or attending APOC and compare the speaker profile of 17th APOC with previous Congresses.

The developments in APOC have reflected those in the regional organization, originally known as the International Federation of Asian and Pacific Associations of Optometrists and since 1995 the Asia Pacific Council of Optometry. Optometry has become a graduate profession in many of the APCO countries, while in others change is coming more slowly. It is important that young optometrists understand the benefits gained from being part of a regional organization, rather than developing, or rather not developing, in isolation. I will suggest to new members of our profession why they should invest time and money attending future APOCs, and I will also reflect on how APOC might change with time to meet the needs of regional optometrists.