



Research leads clinical practice

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The recent discussion for the perspective of translational medicine using WeChat social media hosted by the Journal of the “Translational Perioperative and Pain Medicine” is very successful for exchanging ideas between scientists and clinicians[1]. Medicine is an art in itself. Since there are many unknown and uncontrollable factors, the quality management in medicine can only be called “Quality Assurance”, not the same as the “Quality Control” used in the industry for the quality management. The purpose of medical research is to transform the medicine into science whenever it is possible.

Emphasis on translational medicine is the requirement and inevitable for the current era. The funding spend in basic science is skyrocketing here in China and abroad, however, as a matter of fact, the clinical return from such research spending is unsatisfactory. The essence of medicine is to save lives and cure diseases, and the ultimate goal of research is to improve the clinical practice; therefore, “Research Leads Clinical Practice” should become a common consensus.

Patient-controlled analgesia (PCA) in pain management is one of the great examples of translational medicine. Traditionally, treatment of postoperative pain in patients was achieved very poorly by intermittent intramuscular injection of medication. With the advances in pharmacology, especially with the better understanding of therapeutic window and pd/pk models, individualized pain management becomes possible and practical.

I studied in University of Utah in 1991. Immediately after returning home in 1993, I advocated and promoted the PCA technology in China. With the joint efforts from our colleagues, we advanced individualized clinical pain management in China significantly[2]. The development of oral transmucosal fentanyl citrate is another great example of pharmacology and physiological research promoting clinical advancement[3,4]. Today, the many clinical issues and dilemma remain needing more basic science research. These clinical problems raise more expectations and requirements for basic science research.

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