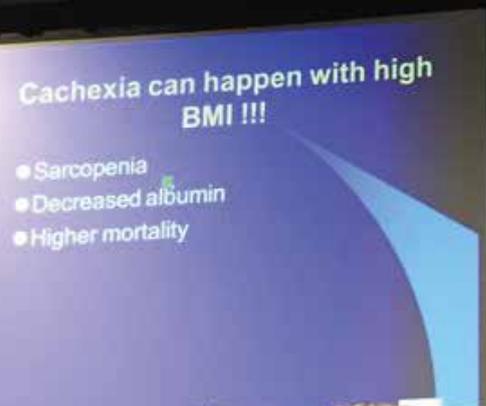


Sharing on 21st International Congress on Palliative Care

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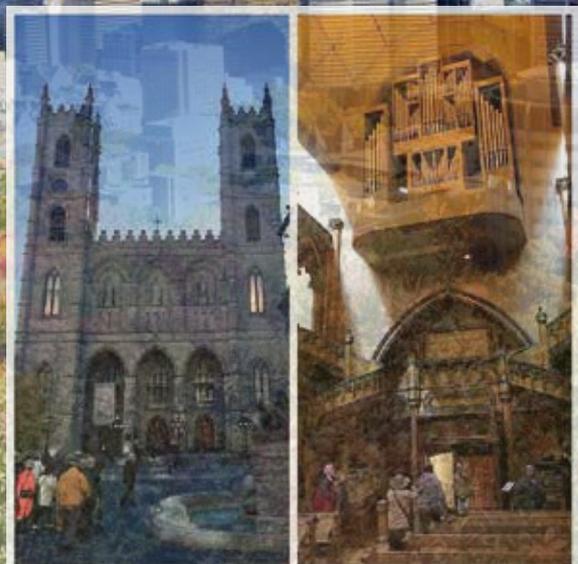


In October 2016, I attended the 21st International Congress on Palliative Care in Montreal, Canada. It was my first ever overseas academic conference, and also my first time travelling alone!

I had one spare day to discover this beautiful city before the congress began. Having collected information from the internet and from my friends, I went to the well known Notre-Dame Basilica in early morning and was astonished by its splendid interior decorations. Since it was the season of maple leaves, I also went for a short hike at Mount Royal Park, where the highest point of the city was located. There was a lookout spot to overlook the Montreal city: the skyscrapers, St Lawrence River and the red leaves.



At the conference, we met palliative care professionals from all over the world. The atmosphere of the conference was more relaxing than I have expected. At the end of each seminar session, many participants shared their experiences in their local practice and exchanged useful advices. The discussion on the misuse of strong opioids triggered a heated debate particularly. "Fentanyl kills" had become a controversial topic that caught a lot of attention in the Western world, including Canada and the US, especially after a celebrity died of fentanyl overdose. The fear in public had grown from the use of counterfeit fentanyl tablets to the application of all strong opioids, which had led to practical challenges in some palliative care units. It may not be so relevant to us in Hong Kong but definitely deserves our attention.



Another inspiring session was Prof Amit Sood's talk on resilience, which taught us simple ways to achieve peace in mind and happiness in daily lives.

It was a rewarding experience for me to join this biannual conference of palliative care, with Dr Clare Leung and Dr Fan. I am really grateful to be granted this opportunity, and I am looking forward to my next overseas conference!