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The Wakley–Wu Lien Teh Prize Essay 2020: Chinese health workers' experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic



"I feel deeply the burden of the honour placed upon me in being chairman of this Medical Conference, which is unique in our history, powerful in its representation, and which gives China a strong position amongst nations seeking the welfare of the people", wrote Wu Lien Teh in his first publication in *The Lancet*,¹ on his inaugural address delivered at the International Plague Conference in Shenyang, China, in 1911. Wu was elected as the chair of the conference for his work in controlling the pneumonic plague epidemic outbreak in 1910–11 in northeastern China, which ultimately claimed about 60 000 lives.

Almost 110 years later, during the menace of another aggressive infectious disease, COVID-19, Wu's successors—more than 40 000 Chinese health workers—convened in Wuhan, China, from January, 2020, and worked tirelessly to care for patients and stem the pandemic. They were hailed as "heroes in harm's way",² for their bravery and heroic efforts to do the opposite when most Chinese citizens stayed at home to avoid the risks of infection. In honour of their incredible work, we are delighted to announce the 2020 Wakley–Wu Lien Teh Prize, *The Lancet's* annual essay competition for Chinese health workers to share their stories.^{3,4}

We invite essays, written in Chinese, on health workers' experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Wakley–Wu Lien Teh Prize shares many similar standards to the Wakley Prize.⁵ The essay should be truthful and thought provoking, with beautiful writing in Chinese that engages our hearts and minds. Essays must be original and should not have been previously published in print or online. Only one submission per author is

allowed and essays should not contain any information that might identify individual patients. Anyone who works in a health-related field, at any career stage, can enter the Wakley–Wu Lien Teh Prize competition, and you can be a student, in training, working your way up the ladder, established in your field, or looking back at decades of work.

Please submit your essay through *The Lancet's* online submission system no later than Oct 31, 2020, stating in your covering letter that the submission is in response to this call. Please choose submission category as the Wakley–Wu Lien Teh Prize. The length of the essay should be 1700–2000 Chinese characters. Entries will be anonymised and judged by the editors of *The Lancet*, as well as an external board established by our Chinese partners. The winner of the Wakley–Wu Lien Teh Prize will receive £2000, and the essay will be published online on *The Lancet's* website by the end of 2020. We look forward to reading your essays.

We declare no competing interests.

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