Primary liver cancer (PLC) is the sixth most common malignancy and the third leading cause of death worldwide. Eighty percent of PLC patients are found in Asian countries. Therefore, it is of paramount importance that all healthcare professionals in the Asia-Pacific region, especially those in China, Korea, and Japan, examine new methods to counteract this highly prevalent disease.

The Asia-Pacific Primary Liver Cancer Expert (APPLE) Meeting provides an excellent platform to exchange information regarding the latest advancements in PLC treatment. The APPLE meeting is organized as an academic program, where medical experts (both regional and international) are given an opportunity to share their updated knowledge of PLC and its clinical management. This meeting is aimed at bridging gaps in the basic science and clinical aspects of liver cancer among professionals. The ultimate aim is dissemination of the results of laboratory research and clinical trials in liver cancer among professionals. Such exchange of ideas will enable professionals to reach a consensus about the urgent and unresolved areas of liver cancer in the Asia-Pacific region.

The first APPLE meeting was hosted by the Korean Liver Cancer Study Group (KLCSG) on July 3–4, 2010 in Incheon, Korea. The second APPLE meeting was hosted by the Liver Cancer Study Group of Japan (LCSGJ) on July 1–3, 2011 in Osaka, Japan. The third APPLE meeting was hosted by the Chinese Liver Cancer Study Group (CLCSG) on July 6–8, 2012 in Shanghai, China. A total of 489 participants registered to attend this meeting.

Following the tradition of the previous two APPLE meetings, medical experts (both regional and international), exchanged and discussed their opinions, and research results on most aspects of liver cancer. This forum will hopefully enable the latest consensus findings on the treatment of liver cancer to be put into clinical practice.

This academic meeting is not a one-off event. We shall continue to have APPLE meetings in China, Korea, and Japan, each hosting the event in rotation, and maintaining good relationships with the International Liver Cancer Association and Asia Pacific Association for the Study of Liver. The fourth APPLE meeting will be hosted by KLCSG on July 5–7, 2013 in Busan, Korea. Once again, we extend a warm welcome to those participating in this meeting. We hope you have a stimulating time and be primed with new enthusiasm for your work. Moreover, Liver Cancer, the first international peer-reviewed journal focusing exclusively on basic and clinical research in liver cancer, is officially affiliated with APPLE. This association will play an important role in contributing and updating knowledge in all aspects of liver cancer. The most valuable, novel, and thought-provoking articles on the basic and advanced clinical research of PLC should be submitted for publication to this exciting and well-regarded journal.