

Mr. President, council members, fellows, diplomats, and esteemed guests, it is with the utmost honour—and perhaps a touch of envy at his impressive achievements—that I present to you one of this year’s most distinguished recipients of the Royal College of Ophthalmologists’ highest accolade: an honorary fellowship. This year, following the nomination by Mr. Hasan Naveed, we are delighted to bestow upon Professor Christopher Liu OBE the title of Honorary Fellow.

Professor Christopher Liu’s journey into the world of ophthalmology began at the tender age of 13 in Hong Kong, when, after the shocking discovery that he was short-sighted, he decided to dedicate his life to the field. He ventured to England, where he pursued his O and A levels, eventually training at the Charing Cross Hospital, University of London. He graduated with BSc Hons and obtained his MBBS qualification in 1985. His specialty in ophthalmology took shape through rigorous training at Charing Cross, Western Ophthalmic, and Moorfields Eye Hospitals, with his higher surgical training culminating at Addenbrooke’s Hospital in Cambridge and West Norwich Hospital.

Over a career spanning more than four decades—nearly 30 years of which have been spent as a Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon—Professor Liu has demonstrated unparalleled determination, commitment, and innovation. He is, without exaggeration, a multi-award-winning Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon of international renown. Among his many accolades are:

The Royal College of Ophthalmologists Bowman Medal Lecture 2024

An OBE, appointed by HM Queen Elizabeth in the 2018 New Year Honours list for Services to Ophthalmology

Hospital Doctor of the Year (South) 2005

Member of Merit, Barraquer Institute

Silver Medal, UKISCRS

Honorary Fellow of the All India Collegium of Ophthalmology

Kersley Lecture 2018

Hay Medal Lecture 2023

EVER-Fellow 2023

Honorary clinical professorships in Hong Kong, India, Japan, and Egypt

But let us not forget, Professor Liu has not only been winning awards for himself; under his expert guidance, numerous trainees and medical students have secured a variety of research prizes.

As a world-renowned leader in corneal surgery, Professor Liu has never been one to follow the crowd—unless, of course, it's to lead them to new heights. Throughout his career, he has consistently challenged conventional practices to improve patient care, boasting around 20 inventions and two patents to his name.

One area where he truly stands head and shoulders above the rest is in the advancement of Immediately Sequential Bilateral Cataract Surgery (ISBCS). Over 20 years ago, Professor Liu introduced the concept of conditional probability in cataract surgery – essentially, if a complication occurs in one eye, it's more likely to happen in the other. He devised a three-step safety protocol, now internationally adopted. His extensive research on ISBCS includes key articles exploring its outcomes and collecting perspectives from ophthalmologists across the UK and Europe. During the COVID-19 pandemic, he worked tirelessly to help develop new pathways within ophthalmology, and his insights from a multidisciplinary workshop were published in the Journal of Medical Ethics. His participation in The Great Debate at a College Congress further highlights his commitment to advancing the field.

Back in 1996, Professor Liu spearheaded the introduction of the Osteo-Odonto-Keratoprosthesis (OOKP) Service in Brighton, a pioneering procedure that has dramatically transformed the lives of patients with end-stage corneal blindness. Having had the privilege of learning OOKP from the late Professor Falcinelli in Rome, Professor Liu brought this extreme surgery to the UK, where it involves reconstructing a new eye using a tiny plastic lens and one of the patient's own teeth. In 2006, the OOKP Service received central funding, allowing patients from across the UK and EU to access it. He has since trained teams and helped establish similar services across the globe, including in Japan, Singapore, India, Malaysia, and beyond. In recognition of his contributions, he was awarded a PhD in 2022 for his thesis on the advancements he made with OOKP. Thanks to his relentless efforts, both the OOKP and ISBCS are now mainstream procedures worldwide.

As a trusted and inspirational leader in international ophthalmology, Professor Liu has not only provided highly specialised corneal services but has also played a pivotal role in the governance and administration of the College. He served six years on the Council and is now in his third year as Honorary Treasurer. Since establishing the Brighton Anterior Segment Fellowship in 1998, he has trained and mentored dozens of corneal fellows, international OOKP fellows, and registrars. His contributions extend to helping shape Refractive Surgery guidelines, modernising governance, and setting up the CertLRS, all while continuing to examine and guide others. His leadership roles are many, including President of the British Society for Refractive Surgery (BSRS), Southern Ophthalmology Society, and the Brighton & Sussex Medico-Chirurgical Society, among others. He is also the Founder President of the British Chinese Ophthalmology Society and has served as Honorary Secretary of the United Kingdom & Ireland Society of

Cataract & Refractive Surgeons (UKISCRS). At every turn, Professor Liu has advocated for the betterment of patients, ophthalmologists, and the field of Ophthalmology.

Beyond his groundbreaking surgical techniques, Professor Liu has made significant contributions to the academic and research community. With over 250 scientific papers and multiple books to his name—including “The Eyes Have It: A Personal View”, “Fundamentals in Ophthalmic Practice”, and “Cataract Surgery – Pearls & Techniques” (which has been translated to Chinese and is being translated to Ukrainian)—his latest scientific literary offering, a corneal tome entitled “Keratoprotheses – Overcoming Corneal Blindness”, is due to be published by Springer later this year after a decade in the making. His ability to balance a full-time clinical NHS consultant post with his academic pursuits is nothing short of remarkable.

But let’s not forget, Professor Liu is not only a brilliant Professor and Ophthalmologist but also a devoted husband to Vivienne and father to their three children. The unwavering support of his family has been instrumental in his success. His older son George is following in his father’s footsteps into Ophthalmology, while his younger son Henry, a budding veterinary surgeon, has his sights set on specialising in veterinary ophthalmology.

Currently, Professor Liu continues to follow his passion as a Consultant Ophthalmologist at the National Treatment Centre Highland in Inverness, specialising in cataract surgery and providing a cornea service that serves the entire Scottish Highlands. He also leads a refractive practice at EuroEyes’ new flagship clinic in his native Hong Kong.

Through his tireless efforts, Professor Christopher Liu has become a true ambassador for the field of Ophthalmology, embodying the values of dedication, innovation, and selflessness. It is with great pride—and perhaps a little awe—that the Royal College of Ophthalmologists recognises his outstanding achievements by awarding him the title of Honorary Fellow.