



Physicians Bridge Pacific

SCAPE Aims to Effect Quality Healthcare Reform in China

A casual Saturday conversation with the current and incoming presidents of SCAPE, Dr. Xiang Qian and Dr Gang Li, and PYA's Steven Gu and Michael Levesque – A 2-Part Series

Sitting atop the global rankings of countries with the highest gross domestic product (GDP), the United States (U.S.) and China share not only positions as international economic leaders, but also challenges stemming from growing aging populations and healthcare delivery systems that are striving to improve quality while keeping up with demand. Despite any perceived U.S. healthcare system shortcomings, countries like China are looking to the U.S. for ways to collaborate through physician training and education and sharing of patient-centered initiatives to create “mutually beneficial healthcare ecosystems.”

With China looking to double its GDP healthcare expenditures over the next five years, the reform spells massive healthcare opportunities for American companies seeking to further care initiatives in China. It also affords great opportunity for helping those who are suffering via a collaborative extension of medical humanity.

[Steven Gu](#), PYA's Director of [U.S.-China Business Advisory Services](#), recently coordinated a conversation between Dr. Xiang Qian and Dr. Gang Li—Chinese American physicians and cofounders of the [Society of Chinese American Physician Entrepreneurs](#) (SCAPE)—an organization that is bringing together those physicians and leaders who can create the strategic plan that not only will help treat the large aging Chinese population over the next decade, but also will shape, by historic proportions, the future of healthcare in one of the world's largest economies.

What follows is Part 1 of a 2-part series in which Steven Gu and PYA's Senior Director of Business Strategy Michael Levesque talk with Dr. Qian and Dr. Li about SCAPE—and how it fits into the big picture of U.S.-China healthcare collaboration and reform.

Good morning, everyone. Thank you for making time to chat with us today. While attending the World Association of Chinese Doctors annual meeting at Stanford, I was eager to learn more about your work with SCAPE and the cross-cultural healthcare opportunities that exist between the U.S. and China. Please tell us about your backgrounds, what brought you to the U.S., and how you came to establish SCAPE.

I graduated from school in China, came to the U.S. in 1999, and have been here ever since. I was a medical school student back then. I was a cardiologist for two years before I came over to the U.S. Over the last 17 years, I went through Ph.D. and residency training here in the U.S. I did my residency in anesthesia at Stanford University and later specialized in pain management. I'm currently a licensed, practicing clinical physician at Stanford Health Care specializing in pain management. I also hold a position as the medical director of Stanford International Medical Services.

Back in 2014, I, along with a few other physicians, formed this society that you now know as SCAPE, or

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the Society of Chinese American Physician Entrepreneurs. As you may know, in China for the last 30 to 40 years, the economy has really taken off and become the second largest GDP [gross domestic product] in the world. By estimation, we think there are over 200,000 Chinese medical school graduates that came to the U.S. during that span. About 6,000 of them went through U.S. residency training and became licensed physicians in the U.S., just like Dr. Li and me. We are scattered around the world and in 50 different states. We decided we need to start working together. We need to connect all those great minds together.

The healthcare system in China cannot meet the growing demand of the economy. Basically, there is no primary care system in China. The trust in doctors is at a historically low point because of overdiagnosis and overtreatment as well as unmatched physician resources over such a large patient population load [not much time spent with patients due to overwhelming patient volume]. Essentially, there is very little patient-centered medical service or healthcare culture in China.

China is stepping into an aging society. Right now, it is estimated that by 2026 (in about 10 years) China will have



Dr. Xiang Qian

*SCAPE - Founder and President
Medical Director of International
Medical Services at Stanford University
Clinical Assistant Professor of
Anesthesiology, Perioperative and Pain
Medicine at Stanford University*

Education

- Zhejiang Medical University (Seven Year), M.D.
- University of Miami School of Medicine, Ph.D.
- University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine (post-graduate)

Residency

- MWMC - Harvard-Affiliated (Internship)
- Stanford University (Residency)
- Stanford University Hospital (Fellowship)

[full bio](#)



Dr. Gang Li

*SCAPE - Co-Founder and
Incoming President
Physician Partner and Education
Director of the Comprehensive Spine
and Sports Center*

Education

- Peking Union Medical College, M.D.
- University of Florida, Ph.D.

Residency

- Massachusetts General Hospital
- Harvard Medical School
- Stanford University School of Medicine (Fellowship)

[full bio](#)

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That is almost equal to the entire U.S. population."



Dr. Qian

more than 300-million citizens over the age of 65. That is almost equal to the entire U.S. population. They [the elderly] will be the ones who require a lot more medical care and attention. The country is not ready for it, and the government has realized that. In recent years, China has begun initiatives to spend more of its GDP on healthcare. As a comparison, spending on U.S. healthcare is about 17.9% of the U.S. GDP; over in China, the government's expenditure on healthcare is less than 5%, but that number is expected to double in about five years.

The healthcare industry will be the largest industry in China in the next few years. We could help them—that was the big picture at the time we started SCAPE. We could do a lot more to help the country make policy, train the best doctors in the

country, and do it right. So that was our mindset. The reason we added “entrepreneurs” at the end of our name is because the U.S. is at the center of the world for innovation and ideas for entrepreneurship. We wanted to do this with a mindset of innovation and breakthroughs and with great minds. We are all ordinary people. We can't always do great things, but we can do little things one by one that can help improve the society, the community, and make some positive changes in peoples' lives. Very quickly that seed has grown into a pretty good tree and has attracted many great minds across the country. We are very happy that so many people think like us and are willing to work with us to promote healthcare knowledge, technology, and education across the world and specifically across the U.S. and China.

Dr. Li

First, I appreciate everyone getting together this Saturday to give us a chance to talk about our society. Dr. Qian is a great speaker, and he already outlined SCAPE pretty clearly and extensively. I have been in the States since 1999, so it has been almost 17 years. I graduated from Peking Union Medical College and got my M.D. there, then came to the states. I got my Ph.D. at the University of Florida. I did my residency at Mass General Hospital and then finished my fellowship at Stanford. I have been practicing in a private practice in the Silicon Valley, and I'm a partner and the education director of the Comprehensive Spine and Sports Center—the biggest private pain management center in Silicon Valley, which provides comprehensive and multidisciplinary pain management services. I am also a clinical assistant professor at Stanford University Pain Management Center. Meanwhile, I also serve as chief medical officer for iHealth Frontier, which is an innovative start-up focusing on improving healthcare outcomes while reducing overall cost.

Dr. Qian has already outlined the establishment of SCAPE, which is a Society of Chinese American Physician Entrepreneurs. At the end of 2014, he gathered eight physicians together from across the United States and started this project. I was not able to imagine that this society could expand as rapidly and extensively and within such a short period of time. And Dr. Qian has been the driving force behind the establishment and rapid development of SCAPE.



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healthcare is less than 5%, but that number is expected to double in about five years."



Steven Gu

PYA - Director of U.S.-China Business Advisory Services

Education

- University of Florida, LL.M.
- Southwestern University of Finance and Economics (China), LL.B.
- West Texas A&M University, Masters of Accounting
- CPA
- Bar Admission in the state of New York

Experience

- Worked in Big 4 and regional accounting firms
- Facilitated a variety of business deals, including largest M&A transaction in the telecommunications industry (\$28.1 billion) and the fifth largest bankruptcy restructuring deal in the U.S.
- Provided outbound investment professional services for the largest Chinese state-owned petroleum company, hydropower company, and privately owned real estate company, as well as Hong Kong's largest publicly traded medical equipment company



Michael Levesque

PYA - Senior Director of Business Strategy

Experience

- More than 30 years of business leadership
- Expertise in strategy, analysis, marketing, and leadership. He has held directorial, senior-level executive, and C-suite positions in both small and large organizations across diverse industry sectors

Dr. Qian

Our mission consists of three parts. Number one is networking. We are aiming to connect all the Chinese American physicians across different subspecialties in the U.S. in order to promote the exchange of ideas among us. The next big part is education; we endeavor to aim high, but act small. We feel that to make an impact on Chinese healthcare, the best way, and most welcome way, is to be involved in education. The physicians in China—especially the young ones—are thirsty for knowledge and technology, because they have been deprived of these opportunities to be aware of these advanced medical humanities. We really are focusing a lot on how to enhance the academic institution collaboration between the U.S. and China. We are also working hard and

trying to design and improve the post-graduate medical education system and trainings for China. We also want to help, through education, to improve the quality of healthcare delivery assistance in China. The patient-physician relationship has been very tense, and we really hope to introduce and promote the medical humanities through education and daily practice to improve that relationship. Last, but not least, through education and collaboration, we are hoping to assist the evolution of China's healthcare. The Chinese Medical Doctor Association (CMDA) formed a strategic partnership with us in August 2015. We are the only overseas physician group that has the honor to work with them. The CMDA and SCAPE collaboration has been great thus far.

Steven Gu

Since your mission focuses heavily on education, please elaborate on some of the initiatives SCAPE is undertaking to further that mission.

Dr. Qian

The first example is that China just laid out the residency training programs a few years ago. They are, at this time, really trying to learn from the American systems where after medical school, you have to go through residency trainings and then subspecialize in fellowship training. They have about 28 subspecialties—surgery, internal medicine, gynecology, pediatrics, etc. For every subspecialty, we have selected two experienced Chinese American physicians to be their “expert committee member” to help them. We have put together 50+ physicians to work with them. It

About SCAPE

- **Founded December 2014**
- **Non-profit international organization led by a core group of Chinese American physicians**
- **Mission is to connect Chinese American physicians across different subspecialties in the U.S., to promote information exchanges, and to improve education between the U.S. and China in the fields of medicine and healthcare**



has really shortened the distance between the U.S. and China in residency training programs. Ten years ago, we couldn't have imagined that you would be able to have this real-time daily communication through social media tools.

Also, we started sending not only those expert committee members, but also physicians, to individual hospitals to participate in hands-on trainings with Chinese new graduates to teach them how to evaluate, examine, and communicate with the patient and the family; formulate a treatment plan; and follow up with them. We also have another group of people that are experts for hospital quality assurance as well as for patient safety. We have about 20 of them who have visited two or three hospitals in China already to give seminars

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and run clinics to implement the metrics from the U.S. —like how to practice in a way that focuses on the patient, how to make sure safety is the main priority of the hospital, and how to improve and measure the quality outcome in China.

And we're really trying to make a difference by going over there, and having the physician residents join us and watch as we select and diagnose a patient — we show them how to decide which patients should be on anticoagulation therapy, how to do lab testing, and how to follow up with patients. We are hoping this is a seed we are planting that one day will grow into a big tree, so we can amplify the efforts and make a huge impact on the country, the healthcare system there, and eventually the patients.

Next up in our 2-part series, we'll continue the conversation with Dr. Qian and Dr. Li about the risks related to investing money and time in China's healthcare system, concerns for creating a balanced system there, and optimism for helping shape the future of care.

If you'd like to learn more about PYA's [U.S.-China Business Advisory](#) services or would like more information about SCAPE, contact Steven Gu (sgu@pyapc.com) or Michael Levesque (mlevesque@pyapc.com) at (800) 270-9629. For more information about SCAPE, email: support@scapeusa.org.

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