



**PRESS RELEASE [For Immediate Release]**

## **Hong Kong Academy of Medicine Nurtures Specialists for 30 Years**

*Upholding standards, safeguarding patient safety and  
actively supporting the development of primary healthcare  
to prepare for future healthcare advancement in Hong Kong*

Photo download link: <http://bit.ly/40uUdG3>

**(Hong Kong – 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2023)** Hong Kong Academy of Medicine (“the Academy”) celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. In addition to organising a series of celebration activities, the Academy held a media tea reception today to celebrate the Chinese New Year and to share the Academy’s latest developments and plans with media guests.

The shortage of doctors and nurses is a prevalent problem in Hong Kong. In response to the challenges of an ageing population and increasing demand for healthcare services, Prof. Gilberto Ka-Kit Leung, President of the Academy, said, “The Academy has been actively supporting the development of Hong Kong’s healthcare system and implementing measures to help alleviate the challenge of manpower shortage. In order to assist non-locally trained doctors to practise in Hong Kong, as a statutory body to organise, monitor, assess and accredit all medical and dental specialist training, the Academy conducts vetting and accreditation of specialist qualifications for non-locally trained doctors in an open, fair and transparent manner through the mechanisms of Certification for Specialist Registration (CSR) and Certification for Specialist Qualification (CSQ).”

On the other hand, the government recently proposed to amend the Supplementary Medical Professions Ordinance with a suggestion relating to direct access to allied health services without doctor’s referral. Prof. Leung stressed that, “Patient diagnosis is essential. ‘Without doctor’s referral’ does not mean ‘without diagnosis’. The Academy supports to further explore the matter of allowing direct access to physiotherapists or occupational therapists without a doctor’s referral, with the prerequisite that patient safety and interests would not be compromised. The arrangement may be tried out under specific circumstances, such as patients who have seen a doctor for the same symptoms and made a referral, and who have had the same symptoms occurred within a certain period of time, may receive direct access to physiotherapists.”

On allowing Chinese medicine practitioners to refer patients for diagnostic imaging and laboratory tests, Prof. Leung remarked, “The Academy recognises the recent development of Chinese medicine and its importance in the Hong Kong healthcare system. Relevant training and accreditation are crucial. The

Academy supports to allow the future Chinese Medicine Hospital (CMH) as the trial site for referral of patients by Chinese medicine practitioners (CMPs) for diagnostic imaging and laboratory tests. We would also like to propose and explore the idea of order of plain X-ray of appendicular skeleton by CMPs who are well-trained and competent to do so outside the context of CMH. The Academy, however, cannot for the time being find it appropriate to allow CMPs to refer patients for laboratory tests outside the context of CMH. Continual discussion on this matter with relevant stakeholders will be maintained.”

The Government launched the Primary Healthcare Blueprint at the end of 2022. At the sharing session, Dr. David Vai-kiong Chao, President of The Hong Kong College of Family Physicians, said, “Implementing ‘Family Doctors for All’ can achieve multiple functions. Family Doctors, as ‘specialists in people’, provide accessible, continuing, comprehensive, whole-person and patient-centred care to people of all ages throughout different stages in life (‘from cradle to grave’), helping individuals and families to manage acute and chronic problems, providing anticipatory and preventive care, and coordinating multidisciplinary care for people according to their needs throughout their life journey. With a population of 7.5 million, Hong Kong needs at least 3,750 trained family doctors to maintain a quality primary healthcare system based on the ratio of family doctors to population in China (1 : 2,000). Assuming 40 years of service for each family doctor, we would need to train at least 100 doctors per year to provide sustainable healthcare services. To complement the roll-out of the Primary Healthcare Blueprint, the College continues to provide various training and continuing medical education programmes to assist family doctors in primary care in maintaining and improving their knowledge and standards.”

Dr. Fei-chau Pang, President of Hong Kong College of Community Medicine cum Commissioner for Primary Healthcare of Health Bureau said, “The Primary Healthcare Blueprint is a prevention-focused, community-based system that promotes the concept of ‘family doctor for all’ and enhances primary healthcare services. For the new system of the existing Primary Care Directory, there is a need to develop training requirements for enrolment and for the content used in regular annual training, which requires the cooperation and support of The Academy and its constituent Colleges to ensure that all family doctors have the relevant knowledge and skills.”

Photo Caption:



Prof. Gilberto Ka-Kit Leung, President of Hong Kong Academy of Medicine, Council Members of the Academy and representatives of different Colleges joined media guests to celebrate the Chinese New Year.



Prof. Gilberto Ka-Kit Leung, President of Hong Kong Academy of Medicine, said that the Academy has been actively supporting the development of Hong Kong's healthcare system, helping alleviate the challenge of manpower shortage and promoting the development of primary healthcare.



Dr. David Vai-kiong Chao, President of the Hong Kong College of Family Physicians, said that the College will provide various training and continuing medical education programmes to assist primary care doctors and family physicians in maintaining and improving their knowledge and standards.



Dr. Fei-chau Pang, President of the Hong Kong College of Community Medicine / Commissioner for Primary Healthcare, said that the cooperation and support of the Academy and its constituent Colleges are required to ensure that all family doctors have the relevant knowledge and skills.

### About the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine

Established in 1993, the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine is an independent institution with statutory power to organise, monitor, assess and accredit all medical and dental specialist training, and the responsibility to oversee the continuing medical education and continuous professional development to maintain the standard of specialists practising in Hong Kong. There are now 72 specialties with around 9,000 Academy Fellows, who are eligible for registration in the Specialist Register of the Medical Council of Hong Kong and Dental Council of Hong Kong on the recommendation of the Academy.

This press release is issued by **SPRG** on behalf of the **Hong Kong Academy of Medicine**.

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