



PRESS RELEASE [For Immediate Release]

Hong Kong Academy of Medicine Advancing into a New Era of Healthcare

*Leveraging the Applications of Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare,
while Promoting Healthcare Professionals' Well-being,
to Uphold Quality Standards and Professional Medical Care*

Photo Link: <https://bit.ly/4bGqbou>

(Hong Kong – 20th February, 2024) Hong Kong Academy of Medicine (“the Academy”) celebrated its 30th anniversary last year, and now the Academy enters the Year of the Dragon embarking upon a new chapter focused on specialist training and further development of medical education. Today, the Academy organised a Media Spring Luncheon, bringing together media friends and colleagues to celebrate the Chinese New Year and share the latest updates on medical trends and topics. These included the latest developments and prospects of the Hong Kong healthcare system, the application and challenges of artificial intelligence in healthcare, and the promotion of well-being among healthcare professionals.

During the luncheon, **Prof. Gilberto Ka-Kit Leung, President of the Academy** stated that, "The Academy actively aligns with the development of Hong Kong’s healthcare system by implementing various measures to ensure the quality of healthcare and address the issue of manpower shortages. As the Academy successfully marked its 30th anniversary celebrations last year, it is now setting up a new milestone in the coming year. We are going to reform our specialty Colleges’ respective training curricula towards Competency-based Medical Education (CBME) and put necessary resources in development of trainers and faculties in order to meet the evolving healthcare needs. We are also pleased to have officially entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Faculty of Medicine of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, HKU Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, and the Hospital Authority at the end of last year. Together, we have committed to organising the Quadripartite Medical Education Conference every three years. This has also established a platform for collaborative exchange to discuss issues of common interest, in particular the alignment of curriculum continuum from medical school admissions to undergraduate medical education, postgraduate training, and independent specialist practice. We also aim to identify other areas for improvements, and to explore relevant issues in Hong Kong's healthcare industry and professional fields. These include topics such as manpower supply, training course design, the physical and mental well-being of students and healthcare professionals, and the appropriate implementation of cutting-edge technologies."

Academy Safeguards Standards for Specialists and Facilitates Admission of Non-locally Trained Doctors

In recent years, the HKSAR government has actively recruited non-local healthcare professionals to alleviate



the issue of manpower shortages. The Academy is committed to providing training for medical and dental specialists. Prof. Gilberto Ka-Kit Leung stated at the luncheon, "The Academy has been reviewing the comparability of qualifications for non-local specialists applying for relevant professional qualifications and recognised credentials by the Academy. We also provide advice to the Hospital Authority on specialist qualifications to applicants for relevant positions. In appropriate and feasible circumstances, we offer training opportunities, aiming to oversee the standards of specialist training in Hong Kong, and ensure the assessment and quality of specialists practising in Hong Kong. The fundamental principle is to achieve an appropriate balance between quality and quantity in manpower provision.

Furthermore, as early as 2019, the Academy established the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Medical Specialist Training Centre in Shenzhen. By the end of last year, the centre had organised a total of 43 specialist doctors in training and train-the-trainer programs in Shenzhen's accredited hospitals. The total number of participants exceeded 1,400, significantly enhancing medical exchange and bridging the healthcare standards between the two regions. The primary objective is to help enhance specialist training and the standard of healthcare services in Shenzhen; it is not aimed at enabling specialists from Shenzhen to work in Hong Kong."

On another topic regarding the proposed amendments to the "Supplementary Medical Professions Ordinance", which involve the issue of "without doctor's referral," Professor Gilberto Ka-Kit Leung emphasised that 'without doctor's referral' does not mean 'without diagnosis.' He said, "It is necessary to fully consider the scope of the applicable arrangements, training and competency levels, and professional responsibilities, etc. The key principle is to ensure a balance between patient safety and ready access to these services. The Academy supports further exploration of the details of 'specified circumstances,' which may allow direct access to physiotherapy or occupational therapy services without a doctor's referral, under the premise of not compromising patient safety and interests. Continued input from the Academy will be crucial for ensuring the proper formulation and implementation of the new policy."

Additionally, regarding the Health Bureau's proposal for the "Gazettal of Advance Decision on Life-sustaining Treatment Bill" by the end of 2023, Professor Gilberto Ka-Kit Leung stated, "The Academy supports the related legislative proposal, believing that legislation will help establish the legal status of advance directives, and thereby alleviate concerns among individuals and the industry regarding the consideration or establishment of advance directives, making such practices more widespread in society. The Academy's Professionalism and Ethics Committee is currently developing a set of best practices guidelines, aiming to provide guidance to medical practitioners on advance care planning, the establishment of advance directives, Do-Not-Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (DNACPR) decisions, handling doubts and conflicts, and patient protection."



Increasing Adoption of Artificial Intelligence: Considerations of Professionalism and Ethics in Adopting Artificial Intelligence to Hong Kong Healthcare

As technology becomes more widespread, the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the healthcare industry is seen as a significant opportunity for the future. The Academy recognised this trend as early as 2021, and established the Task Force on Artificial Intelligence under the Professionalism and Ethics Committee. Dr. Neeraj Ramesh Mahboobani, Convener of the Task Force on Artificial Intelligence of the Professionalism and Ethics Committee of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine, discussed the latest developments and applications of AI in clinical trials during his special topic sharing session. He highlighted the opportunities and challenges that come with it, including issues of reliability, medical legality, and ethical considerations.

Dr. Mahboobani stated that the Task Force is committed to strictly adhering to the Principles of Adoption and Use of AI in healthcare, and promoting healthcare professionalism and ethical practice in the use of AI. They pledged to provide education and training in AI through workshops and seminars, as well as ensuring regular collaboration with local and international institutions and universities. These efforts are aimed at ensuring that the implementation of artificial intelligence in Hong Kong's healthcare system follows the correct path.

The Inseparable Connection Between Healthcare Professionals' Well-being and Patient Safety

Prof. Gilberto Ka-Kit Leung highlighted the Academy's strong focus on the physical and mental well-being of healthcare professionals. He emphasised that the well-being of healthcare professionals, and the safety and care of patients, are inseparable and interdependent. The COVID-19 pandemic posed a significant challenge to the physical and mental health of healthcare professionals. Therefore, during the pandemic period in 2021, the Academy established the "Task Force on Well-Being of Hong Kong Academy of Medicine" specifically to promote the personal well-being of healthcare professionals.

With the luncheon event, the Academy invited Dr. Wing-cheong Leung, Honorary Secretary/Chairman of the Task Force on Well-Being of Hong Kong Academy of Medicine, Dr. Eric Hui-lun Lau, Vice-Chairman of the Young Fellows Chapter of Hong Kong Academy of Medicine, and Dr. Sut-ye Tse, Former Chairman of the Young Fellows Chapter of Hong Kong Academy of Medicine, to discuss the issues related to the physical and mental well-being of doctors. They shared insights with the "ASAP" approach of the Task Force, standing for "Awareness," "Self-care," "Ask for help," and "Promotion of well-being." This approach serves as a reminder for healthcare professionals to be consciously aware of their own physical and mental well-being status. If emotional issues are identified, it is suggested that they should be addressed promptly by seeking assistance. The Academy provides support for the physical and mental well-being of doctors, including the Well-being Charter and an Online Self-assessment tool. These initiatives aim to ensure high-quality and efficient patient



care, while prioritising the well-being of healthcare professionals.

Photo Caption:

<https://bit.ly/4bGqbou>



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



Prof. Gilberto Ka-Kit Leung, President of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine, said that as it is entering into the new year, the Academy is embarking on a new chapter in specialist training and further development of medical education.



Dr. Neeraj Ramesh Mahboobani, Convener, Task Force on Artificial Intelligence of Professionalism and Ethics Committee of Hong Kong Academy of Medicine, discussed the Application of Artificial Intelligence and its opportunities and challenges.



Dr. Wing-cheong Leung, Honorary Secretary / Chairman, Task Force on Well-Being of Hong Kong Academy of Medicine (Centre), Dr. Eric Hui-lun Lau, Vice-Chairman, Young Fellows Chapter of Hong Kong Academy of Medicine (Right), and Dr. Sut-ye Tse, Former Chairman, Young Fellows Chapter of Hong Kong Academy of Medicine (Left), shared information on the importance of healthcare professionals' Well-being topic.

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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 73 specialties with more than 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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