

# Inaugural message from the President of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine

The Hong Kong Academy of Medicine was inaugurated in December 1993. Its main objectives are to undertake and supervise postgraduate medical education and training (PMET), including continuing medical education (CME), in Hong Kong.

As Hong Kong is too small to have independent colleges for the different medical specialties, it was decided that one organisation comprising the different specialties would be more appropriate. The Academy consists of the different specialty Academy Colleges. It coordinates the educational and other professional activities of the Academy Colleges and ensures comparable standards in training, assessment, examinations, and the implementation of CME. This is achieved through the Council—of which each College President is a member—and the Education Committee, which comprises the chairman of the Academy Colleges' education committee, the deans of the two Medical Faculties in Hong Kong and representatives from Hong Kong's Medical Council, Hospital Authority and Department of Health.

At present there are 12 Academy Colleges: Anaesthesiologists, Community Medicine, Dental Surgeons, General Practitioners (Family Medicine), Physicians, Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, Orthopaedic Surgeons, Pathologists, Paediatricians, Psychiatrists, Radiologists, and Surgeons. In addition, there are the Faculties of Ophthalmology and Otorhinolaryngology, which, when their number of specialists increase, should become Academy Colleges.

The programmes and methods of evaluation are being planned and implemented. Supervised training is for a minimum of six years after internship and is broadly divided into general and higher professional training. For physicians, paediatricians and surgeons, an intermediate or entrance examination along the lines of the MRCP(UK) and FRCS has to be passed before commencement of higher or advanced training. Some

Academy Colleges are already holding conjoint examinations with the corresponding medical Royal College of the UK and successful candidates are awarded the UK diploma and a local certificate. A further exit examination is not envisaged. However, some Academy Colleges may hold exit examinations. Whatever the case, the period of supervised training has to be at least six years. All formal examinations will normally include overseas external examiners. After completion of training there will be a final assessment, not necessarily with a formal examination, and if found satisfactory, the candidate will be recommended by the respective Academy College for the award of Fellowship of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine (FHKAM). In turn, the Academy will recommend the awardees' names to be placed on the proposed specialist register of the Hong Kong Medical Council. The FHKAM is the only locally awarded official higher qualification.

Training, largely in-service, takes place in the public hospitals and clinics, which include those of the medical schools at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the University of Hong Kong. This is to be supervised by the director of PMET at each institution, and coordinated and monitored by advisors from the Academy Colleges. Formal teaching sessions such as lectures, seminars, grand rounds and refresher courses are held regularly and direct funding comes from annual subscriptions, fees and donations.

The main hospitals and out-patients' clinics have adequate libraries and teaching facilities and there are recommendations for better staffing ratios to allow protected time for PMET activities. Overseas teachers will continue to be invited to assist in the different educational programmes. In addition, visits to centres outside of Hong Kong will be necessary in many areas for higher professional training and research. Research—both clinical and basic—is encouraged and Academy Colleges have been asked to consider research, where appropriate, as part of higher training.

It is also possible to incorporate PhD and MPhil programmes into the training schemes.

The *Hong Kong Medical Journal* forms an important focal point for PMET and CME. It contains articles of an international standard, often with information of particular relevance to Asia. The HKAM attaches great importance to the Journal and the Editor

is an officer of the Academy's Council. It is hoped that contributions will come not only from local medical doctors and scientists, but also from international contributors. Its publication is timely as the HKAM has over 2000 fellows and will be admitting trainees as members. Of these, many are engaged in basic as well as clinical research. I wish the *Hong Kong Medical Journal* a very successful future.

D Todd  
President  
Hong Kong Academy of Medicine