

Focusing on the eye

This year we saw the formation of the College of Ophthalmologists of Hong Kong—metamorphosing from the Faculty of Ophthalmology—to become a constituent College of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine. The new College, together with the new Eye Hospital (under the Hospital Authority) and the establishment of the Academic Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, add to the improvements made to all aspects of eye care in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong is a small place. The health and care of the eye is but a segment of the many medical specialties. Ophthalmology practice can be at the very basic level of primary care but also requires a high level of expertise and makes use of rapidly advancing medical technology to treat some of the common as well as the rare diseases which can arise in this delicate and important sensory organ.

In this issue of the *Journal*, Professor Mark OM Tso and his colleagues give us a glimpse and some insights into the specialty of ophthalmology in Hong Kong. The many questions raised by Professor Tso are best viewed as the beginning of a new era for eye care in Hong Kong. How to best focus the good efforts of

the various interested groups—the Hospital Authority, the College of Ophthalmologists of Hong Kong, the Universities, ophthalmologists practising in the private sector and primary care, and those in the Department of Health—remains a daunting task.

In this atmosphere of “managed care”, why do we have to read about rods and cones in the pig or a novel protein with neurotrophic properties? Dr CG Gerke et al and Dr GJ Chader et al shed light on the reasons and lead us through two fundamental topics. Thyroid eye disease is certainly a well-known but not yet fully understood subject. *Salmonella* endophthalmitis is rarely seen but should not be mistaken for a tumour.

The far-sightedness of our health care planners in aiming to fulfil the promises so well put by Professor Tso, should be commended. Will good eye care in Hong Kong be accidental or the result of good overall planning?

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Hong Kong Medical Journal