

Message from the Chairman

In my second year as Chairman of the Chinese Medicine Council of Hong Kong (the Council), I am glad to see the regulatory work of Chinese medicine proceed on a full scale smoothly under the Chinese Medicine Ordinance in 2012. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks to all members of the Council and its boards and committees for the substantial work they have done in regulating the Chinese medicine in the past year.

Since the system of Continuing Education in Chinese Medicine (CME) for registered Chinese medicine practitioners (CMPs) was put in place in 2005, more than 5,000 registered CMPs who acquired the required CME points have had their practising certificates renewed. This indicates that the system of CME for the registered CMPs is widely recognised by the profession. The Chinese Medicine Practitioners Board has completed the fourth review of the CME system in August 2012. Revisions have been made to the Handbook on System of Continuing Education in Chinese Medicine for Registered Chinese Medicine Practitioners (the Handbook) after the fourth review. The revised edition of the Handbook has been sent to all registered CMPs in December 2012, to take effect in January 2013. I hope all CMPs continue their efforts to enhance their professional knowledge and skills, so as to keep pace with the times while results of the review were uploaded to.

Taking into consideration of the difficulties encountered by the elderly registered CMPs in pursuing continuing education, the Chinese Medicine Practitioners Board has endorsed the reduction of the requirement of CME points for registered CMPs aged 75 or above in each CME cycle, from 60 to 30 CME points. This arrangement is applicable to registered CMP whose CME cycle commenced after he/she has reached the age of 75. If a registered CMP fails to acquire the required CME points in his/her previous cycle, he/she is required to make up the shortfall so as to have his/her practising certificate renewed, even if he/she has reached the age of 75 in his/her new CME cycle. This arrangement has taken effect on 29 November 2012, the 10th anniversary of the announcement of the first batch of registered CMPs.

In regulating the Chinese medicines sector, the Chinese Medicines Board under the Council has done a lot of work with regard to applications for licences of various Chinese medicines traders and for registration of proprietary Chinese medicines since April and December 2003, respectively. By the end of 2012, the Chinese Medicines Board has issued 6,680 licences to Chinese medicines traders and processed nearly 17,560 applications for registration of proprietary Chinese medicines. The completion of such heavy and arduous tasks was attributed to the support and cooperation of the Chinese Medicines Board and its committees.

Since the provision on labels and package inserts of proprietary Chinese medicines under the Chinese Medicine Ordinance took effect on 1 December 2011, more comprehensive regulation on proprietary Chinese medicines to safeguard the public was put in place. On the whole, the provision was implemented smoothly and widely supported by the public, the Chinese medicines trade and all stakeholders. In addition, the Chinese Medicines Board also published two issues of Chinese Medicines Traders Newsletter to keep the Chinese medicines traders up to date with the latest

information and developments of Chinese medicines and enhance communication with industry peers in relation to practising behaviour and understanding of regulation of Chinese medicines.

In implementing the statutory functions under the Chinese Medicine Ordinance, the Council, the Chinese Medicine Practitioners Board, the Chinese Medicines Board and all the eight committees held 132 meetings in total in 2012. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to all the members for their commitment and efforts. The ever-increasing demand of the community for quality Chinese medicine services and Chinese medicines reflects public trust and confidence in the regulatory regime of Chinese medicine. I am convinced that in addition to the regulatory functions, the Council will continue to work together with the Chinese medicine trade and profession in an effort to boost the development of Chinese medicine in Hong Kong, and to on the basis of steady regulation at present and upgrade traditional Chinese medicine to the global level.

It is evident that great achievements have been made in the implementation of the Chinese Medicine Ordinance and regulatory work of the Council in the past some 12 years. On behalf of the Council, I would like to express our gratitude to the China Drug and Food Administration, the State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine of the People's Republic of China, the Food and Health Bureau of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Department of Health, other policy bureaux and departments, Hospital Authority, colleges and communities running courses of Chinese medicine, organizations of practitioners and Chinese medicines traders, Chinese medicine industry, all existing and former members of the Council, its boards and committees and staff of the Council Secretariat in implementing the regulatory work in Chinese medicine over the past years.

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