



## Message from the Chairman

2011 marked the enactment of the Chinese Medicine Ordinance and the inception of the Chinese Medicine Council of Hong Kong (the Council) for twelve years. At this juncture, I must pay tribute to the former Chairman Mr Fan Chor-ho, Paul and all members for their relentless efforts to implement the regulation of Chinese medicine during the past years. They have handled a great deal of work and made significant contributions in establishing a solid foundation for the current Council to sustain the regulatory work. I am pleased to report the achievements and progress made by the Council in 2011. This report covers the work delivered by the Council in 2011. It also summarizes the regulatory systems of Chinese medicine practitioners (CMPs) and Chinese medicines, and gives an outline of the direction of future work of the Council.

With the enactment of the Chinese Medicine Ordinance (CMO) in July 1999, the professional status of CMPs was firmly established. All provisions concerning regulation of CMPs under the CMO have come into operation and the regulatory system of CMPs has been well in place. As at the end of 2011, the total number of CMPs in Hong Kong is over 9,200. All along, the Chinese Medicine Practitioners Board has maintained close liaison with the profession and encouraged CMPs to pursue their continuing education to upgrade their professionalism. To this end, the Chinese Medicine Practitioners Board starts to launch a quiz in the "Newsletter of Chinese Medicine Practitioners Board" in the December issue every year. Continuing education in Chinese medicine points will be awarded to registered CMPs who give the right answers to a majority number of questions in the quiz. Ardent response was recorded for the first set of questions published in the December 2011 issue of the Newsletter. It is evident that registered CMPs are enthusiastic about continuing education to upgrade their professional knowledge and expertise for serving their patients.

Three major local universities, namely, the University of Hong Kong, the Chinese University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong Baptist University, will revise their undergraduate degree courses in Chinese medicine from five years to six years in 2012 with the implementation of the new 3-3-4 academic system, i.e. three years for junior secondary, three years for senior secondary and another four years for university. Apart from strengthening the major core subjects, liberal studies will be incorporated into the curriculum as the major change. The Chinese Medicine Practitioners Board has accepted the 6-year undergraduate Chinese medicine degree programmes organized by the above three local universities as recognized courses for the licensing examination of CMPs. It is hoped that with the inclusion of liberal studies, the degree courses can foster the training of outstanding Chinese medicine practitioners, and above all, broaden the visions of students so that they will become distinguished practitioners not only in future medical practice, but in other respects.

On regulation of Chinese medicines, the legislative provisions under the CMO related to the label and package insert requirements of proprietary Chinese medicines has come into force on 1 December 2011. The commencement of these provisions is an important milestone in the regulation of Chinese medicines. Apart from enhancing the safety and quality of proprietary Chinese medicines, it will further safeguard consumers' right to know, as well as increase the confidence of the public in using proprietary Chinese medicines, this will boost the development of Chinese medicine in Hong Kong. With the commencement of the provisions related to the label and package insert requirements, all the legislative provisions regarding the regulation of Chinese medicines under the CMO have come into effect.

In the 2010-11 Policy Address, it was announced to engage the trade to work out a timetable for manufacture of proprietary Chinese medicines to comply with the Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP), the Chinese Medicines Board has decided the adoption of the Pharmaceutical Inspection Convention and Pharmaceutical Inspection Co-operation Scheme (PIC/S) GMP as the standards of licensing. Moreover, it is proposed that the trade will be given four years to gear up to the standards. In this regard, I would like to thank the Department of Health, which is now collecting feedback and opinions from the Chinese medicines sector on the proposed implementation and timetable, in order to provide assistance and help resolve the difficulties encountered by the trade. Besides, the Chinese Medicines Board published two issues of "Chinese Medicines Traders Newsletter" in 2011 to enhance the communication with the trade, and to enable the traders to grasp the latest information about trade practice and gain more understanding of the regulation of Chinese medicines.

In 2011, the Council, the Chinese Medicine Practitioners Board, the Chinese Medicines Board and their committees held a total of about 140 meetings to discharge their functions under the Chinese Medicine Ordinance. I would like to thank all members for their dedication to the work of the Council and their great contributions to the regulation of Chinese medicine.