

Announcement of first batch of recognised medical qualifications under Medical Registration Ordinance

In accordance with the Medical Registration Ordinance (the Ordinance), the Registrar of Medical Practitioners (i.e. the Director of Health) announced today (April 27) the first batch of medical qualifications (see Annex) recognised by the Special Registration Committee (SRC).

After the Medical Registration (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 came into effect upon gazettal on October 29, 2021, non-locally trained doctors who possess recognised medical qualifications, subject to their fulfilment of certain criteria, may apply for special registration to practise in the public healthcare institutions (i.e. the Hospital Authority (HA), the Department of Health (DH), the University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong) in Hong Kong. After serving for a certain period, obtaining recognised specialist qualifications and passing the assessment, they will be granted full registration to practise in Hong Kong. For non-locally trained medical graduates who possess the recognised medical qualifications but have yet to undergo internship outside Hong Kong, subject to their fulfilment of relevant criteria, they may take the Licensing Examination of the Medical Council of Hong Kong (MCHK) in order to apply for special registration to practise in the public healthcare institutions in Hong Kong. They may also obtain full registration after meeting the requirements applicable to all special registration doctors.

In November 2021, the SRC was established under the MCHK in accordance with the amended Ordinance to determine the list of recognised medical qualifications after reviewing programmes offered by non-local medical schools with quality comparable to those provided by the two medical schools in Hong Kong. The SRC will submit the list to the Registrar of Medical Practitioners for promulgation.

Under the Ordinance, when determining the list of recognised medical qualifications, the SRC will consider and recommend a medical qualification that fulfils the following criteria:

- (a) that is at the level of degree or higher;
- (b) that is awarded by a body broadly comparable to any local university awarding medical qualifications in terms of international rankings; and
- (c) that is broadly comparable to the medical qualifications awarded by any local university in terms of:
 - (i) curriculum of the programmes leading to the medical qualifications;
 - (ii) medium of instruction of the programmes; and
 - (iii) any other aspects the SRC considers appropriate.

In order that the list of recognised medical qualifications could be

determined early, the SRC has engaged the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications to support the relevant work. After detailed examination, the SRC has earlier submitted to the Registrar of Medical Practitioners the first batch of 27 medical qualifications recommended for recognition. Meanwhile, the SRC is pressing ahead with the assessment of other non-local medical programmes with a view to submitting the remaining medical qualifications to be recognised in batches as soon as possible.

The Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, said, "I am very grateful to the SRC Chairperson, Professor Grace Tang, and all of the members for their hard work in the past few months, which has resulted in the initial achievements in determining the list of recognised medical qualifications. I am confident that under the leadership of Professor Tang, the SRC will continue to discharge its statutory duties effectively and complete the task of determining the full list within this year.

"Given the current shortage of doctors in the public healthcare system, the announcement of the first batch of recognised medical qualifications is timely for qualified non-locally trained doctors to come to serve in the public healthcare institutions in Hong Kong through special registration as soon as possible. For students who intend to study medicine outside Hong Kong, they may refer to the list when making their choices for further studies. The Government will continue to enhance promotion on various registration pathways under the Ordinance through the Economic and Trade Offices, including conducting webinars with Hong Kong doctors and medical students in the respective places by the Food and Health Bureau, the HA and the DH, so as to encourage more qualified non-locally trained doctors to practise in Hong Kong."

The list of the first batch of recognised medical qualifications will be gazetted on April 29 and will take effect on the same day. It will be submitted to the Legislative Council for negative vetting on May 4.