

Chinese Medicine Development Blueprint Subcommittee holds first meeting today (with photos)

The Commissioner for Chinese Medicine Development (C for CMD) of the Health Bureau (HHB), Dr Vincent Chung, chaired the first meeting of the Chinese Medicine Development Blueprint Subcommittee (CMDDBSC) today (October 29), and discussed with members the major areas to be covered in the Chinese Medicine Development Blueprint in order to harness collective wisdom and insights.

Hong Kong embraces a healthcare system that incorporates both Chinese and Western medicine on a dual-track basis. The application of pure traditional Chinese medicine (CM) theories and methods for prevention and treatment of diseases is a distinctive advantage of CM in Hong Kong. The development of CM in Hong Kong has been progressing steadily over the past two decades or so. Complemented by the successive implementation of various policy initiatives, CM has emerged as an integral part of the city's healthcare system. On this basis, the members were of the view that it is now an opportune time for Hong Kong to further strengthen the role of CM in the overall healthcare system. A framework should also be set up in a proactive manner to enable collaboration among the CM sector and other healthcare professions, with a view to providing more comprehensive Chinese and Western medical services to members of the public.

During the meeting, the members engaged in in-depth discussions and offered constructive suggestions on multiple major areas to be covered in the Blueprint, including establishing a comprehensive governance framework and service system for CM, upgrading CM education and professional training standards, constructing a professional development system for CM personnel, reviewing the prevailing regulatory framework and legislation for CM, cultivating interdisciplinary collaboration networks among CM practitioners, making good use of medical data to promote service development and support policy formulation, driving scientific research and innovation, facilitating the CM industry in levelling up and assisting high-quality CM products to go global, as well as fostering cultural inheritance and promotion of CM. The relevant suggestions, having regard to their nature, will be relayed to the three working groups under the CMDDBSC, namely the Working Group on the Development of Chinese Medicine Services, the Working Group on the Development of Chinese Medicine Industry and Cultural Popularisation, and the Working Group on the Development of Chinese Medicine Profession and Talent Cultivation, for focused study and exploration to formulate a preliminary plan of the Blueprint and relevant strategies.

Dr Chung expressed gratitude to members for being keen to engage in the discussions and expression of views. He said, "The Chief Executive announced in the 2024 Policy Address that the Government will make use of Hong Kong's advantages in its healthcare system, regulatory regime, standard-setting,

clinical research and trade, and other areas to develop Hong Kong into a bridgehead for the internationalisation of CM, and publish the Blueprint next year. The Chinese Medicine Unit of the HHB will work towards these goals by pressing ahead with the consultation on the Blueprint and maintaining close liaison with local, Mainland and international stakeholders through different platforms and means to forge consensus, with a view to mapping out and formulating the vision and strategies for the future development of the CM sector in Hong Kong through concerted efforts."

To gather a wider spectrum of views, the Government established the CMDBSC under the Chinese Medicine Development Committee (CMDC) on September 1 this year. Chaired by the C for CMD of the HHB, the CMDBSC comprises ex-officio members, Chairmen of the Chinese Medicine Practice Subcommittee and the Chinese Medicines Industry Subcommittee under the CMDC, representatives from the Chinese Medicine Hospital of Hong Kong and the schools of CM of three local universities, and persons from the fields of CM practice, CM drugs, other healthcare professions, testing, research and development, social services, education, etc. The CMDBSC is tasked to make recommendations to the CMDC on concrete strategies for the overall development of CM, as well as the short, medium and long-term objectives and respective feasible initiatives for the long-term planning.

