

FHB's Health Research Symposium highlights implementation of evidence-based research in COVID-19 era and other global health challenges (with photo)

The biennial Health Research Symposium, organised by the Food and Health Bureau (FHB), was held today (November 23). With the theme of "Implementing evidence-based research in the era of COVID-19 and other global health challenges", the Symposium also commemorated the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the Health and Medical Research Fund (HMRF).

At the opening ceremony of the Symposium, the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, stated that the HMRF successfully consolidated the different fundings on health and medical research by the Government over the past 30 years. It is an important milestone for its establishment of 10 years.

Professor Chan said, "Over the past 30 years, the FHB, through the HMRF and its former funds, has taken the lead in supporting health-related research. The HMRF is uniquely positioned as the only local funding platform bridging the gap between benchtop research and clinical translation research findings. Its effectiveness derives from its collaborative support to locally based researchers and scientists from academia, frontline medical professionals from all disciplines and non-governmental organisations. Advancing health science can improve health services, and enhance people's health and quality of life."

The FHB and the HMRF have rapidly approved over \$500 million to support 67 COVID-19 research studies since April 2020. Many of these studies apply cutting-edge technologies to fill the knowledge gaps from bench to bedside to the community and to better prepare Hong Kong for the recovery stage of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The hybrid Symposium was attended by over 800 medical and healthcare practitioners, academics, researchers, representatives from the community and the Government. Four renowned international experts: Professor Chris Butler, Professor Paul Glasziou, Professor Per Nilsen and Professor Steven Riley delivered keynote lectures on controlling the COVID-19 pandemic and implementing research findings in clinical practice. They also exchanged views with the audience online.

Moreover, 20 leading local project teams from a variety of health-related disciplines shared their experiences and outcomes of their projects on combating COVID-19 and preparedness for the next pandemic, and

implementing research findings in clinical practice and primary healthcare. Four recipients of the Research Fellowship Scheme also shared their experience of training and how they have applied their new skills in the public healthcare setting. Nearly 200 projects funded by the HMRF, which set a benchmark to foster evidence-based interventions with a view to improving the health of the population, were showcased at the Symposium via an electronic poster exhibition.

To recognise the excellent research efforts on COVID-19 and celebrate the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the HMRF, two categories of special awards were presented at today's Symposium. A full list of awardees is stated below:

Outstanding Project Team on COVID-19 Research Awards

Professor Benjamin John Cowling

Professor Ng Siew-chien

Professor Leo Poon Lit-man

Dr Gilman Siu Kit-hang

Professor Zhang Tong

The 10th HMRF Anniversary Awards

(a) Breakthrough Research

Professor Alfred Cheng Sze-lok

Professor Richard Choy Kwong-wai

Professor Jin Dong-yan

(b) Public Health, Clinical and Health Services Research

Professor Cindy Lam Lo-kuen

Dr Wendy Lam Wing-tak

Professor Vincent Mok Chung-tong

(c) Health Promotion

Professor Lam Tai-hing

Professor Albert Lee

Professor Vivian Lee Wing-yan

Professor Agnes Tiwari Fung-yee

In addition, 10 awards were presented to researchers in recognition of their outstanding contributions to health and medical research, and health promotion. The list of awardees is as follows:

Excellent Research Awards

Professor Richard Choy Kwong-wai

Professor Ava Kwong

Professor Wallace Lau Chak-sing

Dr Li Miaoxin

Professor Winnie Mak Wing-sze

Professor Ng Ho-keung

The Most Promising Young Researcher Awards

Dr Cheung Ching-lung

Dr Li Miaoxin

Excellent Health Promotion Project Awards

Ms Vicky Chung Wai-yin

Professor Angela Leung Yee-man

