

FOREWORD

Anyone connected with the teaching of medical undergraduates must welcome the efforts of the General Practitioners of Hong Kong to set up a College aiming at improving the standard of the service that they provide to the public. Those interested in Community Medicine are particularly pleased. It is not because we Community physicians claim to be expert in the arts of general practice but because, in our study of the changing pattern of health and disease in the community, we realize that our medical curriculum only prepares students imperfectly for many of the problems encountered in general practice. The University in its revision of the medical curriculum is interested in filling this gap and we may hope to see developments in the next few years. The present formation of the College is therefore most timely.

The decision of the General Practitioners themselves to set out to improve the standard of their specialty shows that they are genuinely eager to provide a better service for the people of Hong Kong. It also means that it will, if the successes of other Colleges are a guide, inaugurate a period of research by general practitioners which will enable a more logical employment of the resources available. In such research the Department of Community Medicine is deeply interested and will assist in any way it can. There are several ways in which this can be done. Bibliographic research, discussion of research method and statistical advice are all required to make the research meaningful. The solution to these problems is essential and will involve much hard work but they are not insuperable.

The field for research by general practitioners in Hong Kong is practically unlimited. General Practitioners elsewhere have made many important observations, we can expect similar success in Hong Kong.

The formation of the College also demonstrates a confidence in the future of General Practice. Hong Kong will, no doubt, develop a system that suits its own particular situation, but in the future it is likely that more and more people will feel that they have a family doctor of their own and that their doctor is making every effort to keep himself up to date and also that he is making the best use of all the medical and social services available.

I am sure that the foresight and energy of the group of general practitioners who have set this College on its feet will be rewarded by its future success.

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