



新聞稿 PRESS RELEASE

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NEW UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT TO BOOST
EYE CARE EDUCATION AND SERVICES

Eye care education and services in Hong Kong receive a major boost with the creation of a new eye department at the medical faculty of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, which will improve training for medical students and doctors, stimulate pioneering research and provide expert eye care for patients.

Funded by the Universities and Polytechnic Grants Committee, the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences has been set up last month to coordinate teaching and research at both University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University. The Hospital Authority also makes available to the new Department the facilities of Hong Kong Eye Hospital at the Argyle Street for teaching and clinical services. This is a first successful attempt to gather resources of the two universities and the Hospital Authority to form a department for educational, research and clinical services programmes.

The establishment of the new Department marks a milestone in the development of eye care services in Hong Kong. It also reflects the recognition of the growing problem of eye diseases among the aging population in the territory, and the need to enhance expert eye care and research.

A world-renowned Chinese-American ophthalmologist, Prof. Mark Tso On-man, has assumed office last month as Chairman and Professor of the Department.

Well-known for his distinguished contribution to the treatment of retinal vascular diseases, and ophthalmic pathology and oncology, Prof. Tso devoted himself to teaching, research and clinical services at leading U.S. medical centres -- including the George Washington University Medical Center, Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, Boston University Hospital and University of Illinois -- for the past three decades.

Before joining the Chinese University, he was Professor of Ophthalmology and Director of Macular Clinic at Illinois Eye and Ear Infirmary, University of Illinois at Chicago, for 18 years.

"Medical technology has grown by leaps and bounds in recent years enabling us to tackle diseases which were incurable before," said Prof. Tso at a press conference today.

- 2 -

"Our mission will be to apply such high technology to rescue patients from the verge of blindness as well as to promote the level of eye care to the highest possible standard," he said.

Collaborative clinical and research projects -- which will pool experts from different departments of both universities -- are being planned. These include the epidemiological studies of territory-wide prevalence and incidence of blinding conditions; projects to develop new therapeutic agents and biomaterials for the treatment of eye diseases; and a study of patients with pathological myopia -- which has high incidence among Chinese -- for pathogenetic and therapeutic research.

Plans are also on hand to beef up training for doctors at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, as well as to provide review courses for primary care physicians.

Hong Kong now has 100 eye doctors to take care of the 6 million population. Sixty of them work in eight teams in public hospitals and clinics, and the rest in private practice. So the ratio of ophthalmologists to population in Hong Kong is approximately 1 to 60,000 - 75,000 for the public sector, comparing with 1 to 28,000 in Canada, 1 in 25,000 in Taiwan and 1 in 100,000 in Jiangsu Province in China.

Prof. Tso's teams will be based in the Hong Kong Eye Hospital at Argyle Street, the Lee Ka Shing Eye Clinic at the Prince of Wales Hospital; and a new eye clinic at the Queen Mary Hospital.

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