



香港家庭醫學學院 The Hong Kong College of Family Physicians

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

World Family Doctor Day 2024: "Healthy Planet, Healthy People", A Call to Action for Healthier Communities in Hong Kong

The global community comes together to celebrate the World Family Doctor Day (WFDD) designated by the World Organisation of Family Doctors (WONCA) on 19th May each year. This year, under the theme "Healthy Planet, Healthy People," the vital role that environmental health plays in shaping the well-being of individuals and communities is the main focus. Health studies reveal how changes that humans make to our natural systems affect people's health. As we face many unprecedented environmental challenges, from climate change to pollution and habitat destruction, the repercussions on human health become increasingly serious. These environmental changes contribute to a rise in communicable and non-communicable diseases, impact mental health, and exacerbate health disparities globally.

Family doctors bear witness to the health impacts of climate change, from increased respiratory illnesses due to pollution, to the spread of vector-borne diseases with changing climates. According to World Health Organisation (WHO), the healthcare sector is a major polluter, accounting for 4.4% of global carbon emission. Primary care is crucial to cutting healthcare sector's carbon footprint. Dr David Chao, the President of the Hong Kong College of Family Physicians, indicated that, focusing on early disease detection, early treatment and lifestyle changes can help reduce the need for resource intensive medical treatments later. Not only does it improve health outcomes but also significantly lowers emissions by reducing energy-intensive procedures.



The WFDD provides an excellent opportunity to acknowledge and appreciate the progress made in Family Medicine and the exceptional contributions of primary care teams globally in improving healthcare outcomes and creating healthier communities worldwide. Family doctors provide accessible, timely and whole-person care to their patients in the community. Family doctors are health advisers and treatment navigators of patients, building continuing relationship and mutual trust with them. People taken care of by their



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own family doctors can better manage their health, resulting in a lower demand for in-patient services. In countries where there is a sufficient number of family doctors supporting the health system, healthcare resources are utilised more effectively leading to better protection of the health of citizens.

The Hong Kong College of Family Physicians (HKCFP) continues to be at the forefront of providing continuous medical training to doctors, ensuring that the highest standards of family medicine are upheld. Our sophisticated yet flexible training programmes are designed to equip practising doctors with the expertise needed to manage a spectrum of health challenges, including the recent flu epidemic and the escalating social issues in mental health in Hong Kong.

With the proportion of older persons to the whole population surging to 22.4%, there is an increasing demand for chronic disease management and long-term care. The HKCFP is committed to facilitate the re-engineering services in collaboration with District Health Centres (DHCs) to deliver comprehensive care for patients with chronic conditions such as hypertension and diabetes mellitus. Since over 70% of primary care services in Hong Kong are provided by private medical practitioners, the HKCFP supports the Government's initiative to sharing out the workload of the public healthcare sector, thus optimising the primary healthcare use of resources in the community.

To enhance the preparedness and readiness to cope with the healthcare needs of the citizens, the HKCFP has collaborated with the Primary Healthcare Office of the Health Bureau in developing a series of training programmes focusing on chronic diseases for doctors participating in the Chronic Disease Co-Care (CDCC) Pilot Scheme and other practising doctors who aim to keeping up to date on current medical knowledge and skills for the ultimate benefits of the patients.





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About World Family Doctors Day

Initiated by the World Organization of Family Doctors (WONCA)

<https://worldfamilydoctorday.org/>, World Family Doctors Day is an annual celebration that acknowledges the indispensable role family doctors play in healthcare systems across the globe. It is a day to reflect on the essential care provided by family physicians and their advocacy for the health and well-being of their patients.

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About HKCFP please visit http://www.hkcfp.org.hk/pages_1_27.html