

Core Competencies of Family Doctors in Hong Kong



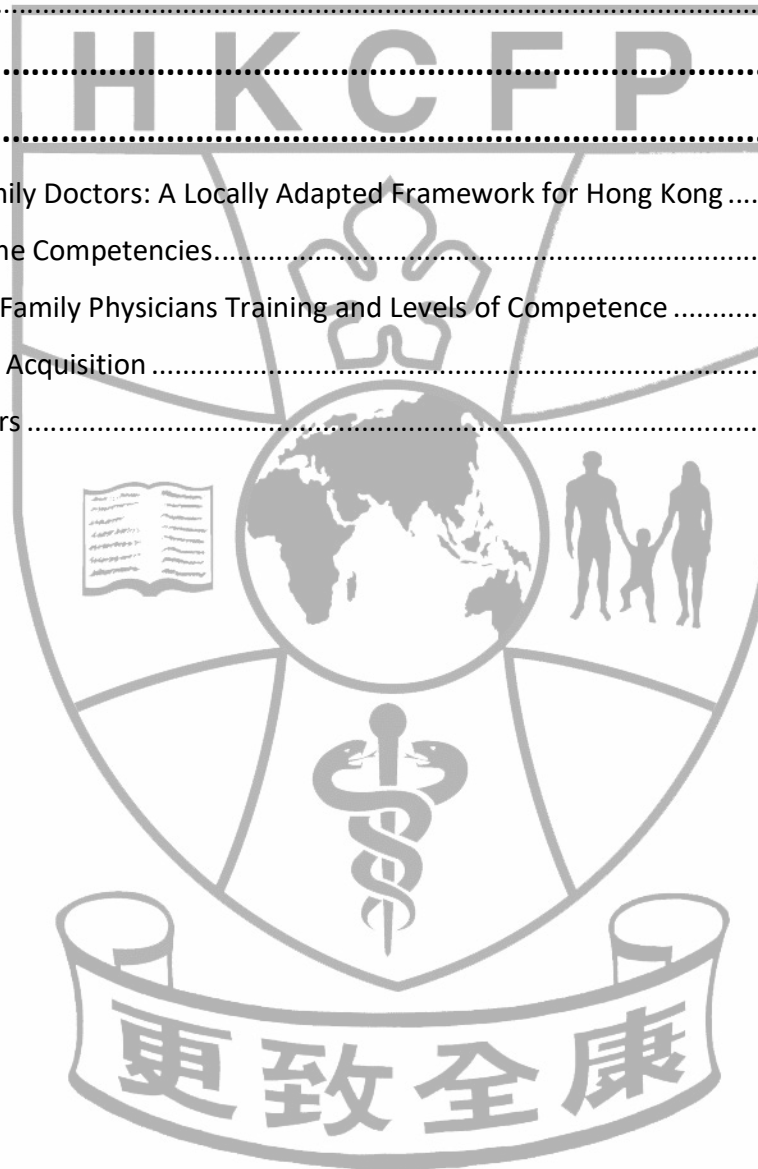
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Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	4
● The Role and Function of Family Doctors.....	4
● Person-Centred Competencies as the Organizing Framework.....	4
● Purpose and Scope of This Framework.....	4
2. COMPETENCIES AT EACH TRAINING MILESTONE OF FAMILY MEDICINE IN HONG KONG	5
● Competency Framework and Levels of Mastery.....	5
● Diploma in Family Medicine (DFM) Competencies.....	5
● Fellowship of Hong Kong College of Family Physicians/International Conjoint Fellowship of Royal Australian College of General Practitioner Competencies.....	5
● Six Core Competency Domains - Overview.....	5
3. HKCFP VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN FAMILY MEDICINE (FHKCFP) - LEVEL OF COMPETENCIES.....	6
4. FELLOWSHIP OF THE HONG KONG ACADEMY OF MEDICINE IN FAMILY MEDICINE (FHKAM (FM)) COMPETENCIES.....	7
5. SIX CORE COMPETENCY DOMAINS – DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS.....	7
(1) Professionalism and Leadership.....	7
(2) Patient-Centred and Interpersonal Communication and Relationships.....	7
(3) Clinical Expertise and Decision-Making.....	8
(4) Whole-Person and Continuous Care.....	9
(5) Population and Community Health Orientation.....	10
(6) Systems-Based Practice and Practice Management.....	10
6. SUMMARY OF COMPETENCY PROGRESSION	12
● DFM (Beginner):.....	12



- FHKCFP/FRACGP (Competent):..... 12
- FHKAM (FM) (Specialist):..... 12
- 7. REFERENCES 13**
- 8. APPENDICES 14**
- Appendix 1: Core Competencies of Family Doctors: A Locally Adapted Framework for Hong Kong 14
- Appendix 2. The Tree of Family Medicine Competencies..... 17
- Appendix 3. The Hong Kong College of Family Physicians Training and Levels of Competence 18
- Appendix 4: The Dreyfus Model of Skill Acquisition 24
- Appendix 5: Definition of Family Doctors 25



1. INTRODUCTION

Person-centred care forms the foundational principle and ultimate objective of family medicine, underpinning all core competencies expected of family doctors in Hong Kong. Family doctors cultivate enduring therapeutic relationships with individuals and their families, integrating biomedical, psychological, social, and cultural dimensions of health across the entire life course. This holistic approach distinguishes family medicine as a discipline uniquely positioned to address the complex, multifaceted health needs of populations.

- **The Role and Function of Family Doctors**

Family doctors serve as the primary point of contact for patients seeking medical care with undifferentiated problems, manage ongoing health conditions and provide preventive care within the community. They deliver continuous, comprehensive, and coordinated care and at the same time, take into account the patient's family and social circumstances and evolving health needs over time. Through their gatekeeping and stewardship roles, family doctors enhance the accessibility, equity, safety, and cost-effectiveness of care for individuals, families, and communities. They coordinate services according to patients' health needs, advocate for patients and drive quality improvement within multidisciplinary teams and healthcare systems.

- **Person-Centred Competencies as the Organizing Framework**

Each core competency—spanning professionalism and ethics, patient-centred communication, clinical decision-making, whole-person care, population health, and systems-based practice—exists fundamentally to enable person-centred, relationship-based care rather than task-focused, episodic interventions. The progressive developmental expectations across the Diploma in Family Medicine (DFM), Fellowship of the Hong Kong College of Family Physicians/International Conjoint Fellowship (FHKCFP/ICFRACGP), and Fellowship of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine in Family Medicine (FHKAM(FM)) reflect increasing capability to personalize care, manage complexity, and respond thoughtfully to patients' goals and values.

- **Purpose and Scope of This Framework**

This core competency framework describes the professional standards and developmental trajectory expected of family doctors in Hong Kong, ensuring that training, assessment, and continuing professional development remain aligned with person-centred care as the central organizing principle. It provides guidance for educators, trainees, policymakers, and healthcare leaders to design and evaluate training programmes that strengthen family doctors' contribution to an integrated, people-centred primary care system responsive to Hong Kong's unique healthcare landscape and population needs.

2. COMPETENCIES AT EACH TRAINING MILESTONE OF FAMILY MEDICINE IN HONG KONG

The Hong Kong College of Family Physicians (HKCFP) training pathway employs a structured competency-based framework (Appendix 1-3) aligned with the Dreyfus model of skill acquisition (Appendix 4), progressing through three major milestones: DFM, FHKCFP/ICFRACGP, and FHKAM(FM). Each milestone represents increasing levels of clinical competence and professional capability (Appendix 3).

● **Competency Framework and Levels of Mastery**

The training progression follows the Dreyfus developmental model, which describes skill acquisition through five stages: *novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient, and expert*. In Hong Kong's family medicine context:

- ✓ **DFM level:** Beginner family doctors who can practice safely in the primary care setting with the ability to make correct clinical judgments
- ✓ **FHKCFP/ICFRACGP level:** Competent family doctors capable of practicing family medicine and managing the majority of health problems in the primary care as counterparts to hospital-based specialist colleagues
- ✓ **FHKAM(FM) level:** Proficient Specialist in Family Medicine demonstrating advanced proficiency in practice, training, service innovation and scientific advancement of Family Medicine.

● **Diploma in Family Medicine (DFM) Competencies**

The DFM aims to train family doctors to practice family medicine at a beginner level in Family Medicine to meet the healthcare needs of children, adolescents, adults, and elderly patients. Beginners in Family Medicine demonstrate the knowledge and application of Family Medicine including the ability to handle multiple tasks in a consultation, focus on key problems, contextualize management to relevant medical and psychosocial issues, and demonstrate familiarity with relevant practice guidelines.

● **Fellowship of Hong Kong College of Family Physicians/International Conjoint Fellowship of Royal Australian College of General Practitioner Competencies**

The FHKCFP programme trains family doctors to function at a competent level, preparing them for leadership, training, and administrative roles in family medicine development. Competent family doctors demonstrate the ability to take a holistic view of patients in their biopsychosocial context, prioritize and address key patient issues, recognize deviations from usual patterns, and provide guidance and supervision to junior doctors.

● **Six Core Competency Domains - Overview**

1. Professionalism and Leadership

Family doctors uphold rigorous standards of integrity and professionalism. They are committed to continuous learning and contribute to the profession through mentoring others and assuming healthcare leadership in clinic, community, professional organisation or government committee.

2. Patient-Centred and Interpersonal Communication and Relationships

A trusting doctor-patient relationship with respectful communication is the foundation of family medicine. In Hong Kong's multicultural society, family doctors must be able to engage with patients across different languages, cultures and generations.

3. Clinical Expertise and Decision Making

Having up-to-date clinical knowledge is essential to being a family doctor. Family doctors must be skilled in diagnosing and managing a wide range of health conditions across all age groups, including situations involving uncertainty.

4. Whole-Person Care and Continuous Care

Family doctors provide whole-person care across the lifespan, taking into account family circumstances and other socio-demographic factors on their impact on health. They provide longitudinal person-centred care that integrates physical, psychological, and social aspects of health.

5. Population and Community Health Orientation

Family doctors contribute not only to individual patient care but also to the broader community's health. The growing impact of public health challenges such as aging populations, emerging infectious diseases, multimorbidity and mental health requires them to engage beyond the clinic setting.

6. Systems-Based Practice and Practice Management

Family doctors must know how to navigate healthcare systems and manage the operational side of primary care. This includes having the knowledge of healthcare policies, legal aspects of healthcare and the effective use of digital tools to enhance care.

3. **HKCFP VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN FAMILY MEDICINE (FHKCFP) - LEVEL OF COMPETENCIES**

Ten Clinical Skills Domains demonstrated and assessed with core competencies matched:

1. Communication and consultation skills (Competency 2)
2. Clinical information gathering and interpretation (Competency 2)
3. Diagnosis, decision-making and reasoning (Competency 3)
4. Clinical management and therapeutic reasoning (Competency 4)
5. Preventive and population health (Competency 5)
6. Professionalism (Competency 1)
7. Family medicine systems and regulatory requirements (Competency 6)
8. Procedural skills (Competency 3)
9. Managing uncertainty (Competency 3)
10. Identifying and managing the patient with significant illness (Competency 3)

4. FELLOWSHIP OF THE HONG KONG ACADEMY OF MEDICINE IN FAMILY MEDICINE (FHKAM (FM)) COMPETENCIES

The FHKAM(FM) serves as the professional benchmark for Family Medicine Specialists and represents the highest training milestones and advanced proficiency. This qualification emphasizes mastery-level across all competency domains of being a Family Medicine Specialist in daily practice and development to become trainers, mentors, service innovators, researchers and advocates to advance Family Medicine.

5. SIX CORE COMPETENCY DOMAINS – DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS

(1) Professionalism and Leadership

Family doctors uphold rigorous standards of integrity and professionalism. They are committed to continuous learning and contribute to the profession through mentoring others and assuming healthcare leadership in clinic, community, professional organisation or government committee.

Core competencies include:

- ✓ Practice with integrity, honesty, and respect
- ✓ Apply ethical principles in complex clinical situations
- ✓ Reflect on one's practice to foster growth and accountability
- ✓ Engage in ongoing professional development
- ✓ Contribute to clinical governance and quality improvement
- ✓ Teach, mentor, or contribute to academic or community-based research

Specialist Level of Competencies

- ✓ Anticipate professionalism challenges at individual and system levels
- ✓ Manage and mentor others in ethical reasoning and assuring professional standards.
- ✓ Balance organisational responsibilities with patient advocacy and care quality.
- ✓ Expand the knowledge base of family medicine through dissemination of original research
- ✓ Represent Family Medicine in Government Boards and Committees
- ✓ Serve as trainers, examiners and committee members of the Hong Kong College of Family Physicians

(2) Patient-Centred and Interpersonal Communication and Relationships

A trusting doctor-patient relationship with respectful communication is the foundation of family medicine. In Hong Kong's multicultural society, family doctors must be able to engage with patients across different languages, cultures and generations.

Core competencies include:

- ✓ Build rapport and trust across diverse patient populations irrespective of age, gender and ethnicity
- ✓ Conduct consultations that respect patient values, preferences, and beliefs
- ✓ Explain medical issues clearly and facilitate shared decision-making
- ✓ Manage sensitive discussions (e.g. mental health, bad news delivery)
- ✓ Coordinate care through effective communication with other professionals

Specialist Level of Competencies

- ✓ Sustain trusting relationships across the continuum of care, regardless of complexity
- ✓ Work with families effectively, including conducting family interviews
- ✓ Anticipate communication barriers and addresses them proactively
- ✓ Independently utilize shared decision making to align patient/family values, goals, and preferences with treatment options to make a personalized care plan
- ✓ Lead multidisciplinary dialogue, coordinates care recommendations across teams, and models professionalism in feedback and system improvement discussions.
- ✓ Demonstrate efficiency in documenting patient encounters and updating record

(3) Clinical Expertise and Decision-Making

Having up-to-date clinical knowledge is essential to being a family doctor. Family doctors must be skilled in diagnosing and managing a wide range of health conditions across all age groups, including situations involving uncertainty.

Core competencies include:

- ✓ Gather and interpret relevant clinical information effectively and efficiently
- ✓ Perform relevant and respectful physical examinations
- ✓ Apply clinical reasoning to generate provisional and differential diagnoses
- ✓ Utilize evidence-based approaches to treatment planning
- ✓ Perform investigations and procedures appropriate to the primary care setting
- ✓ Recognize complex or serious conditions that require referral
- ✓ Manage undifferentiated symptoms, common illnesses, chronic conditions and multimorbidity

Specialist Level of Competencies

- ✓ Lead multidisciplinary responses to complex acute or chronic presentations.
- ✓ Independently coordinate care for acutely ill patients with complex histories and comorbidities

- ✓ Formulate individualised management plans for acute illness taking into account complex psychosocial factors and patient preferences
- ✓ Facilitate efforts at self-management of chronic conditions, including engagement of family and community resources
- ✓ Integrate clinical experience and comprehensive knowledge in the management of patients across the lifespan irrespective of sex, age and socio-economic status
- ✓ Use evidence, experience, and population-level perspectives to shape care pathways and enhance quality of practice.
- ✓ Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of behavioural strategies and resources to address patient's needs

(4) Whole-Person and Continuous Care

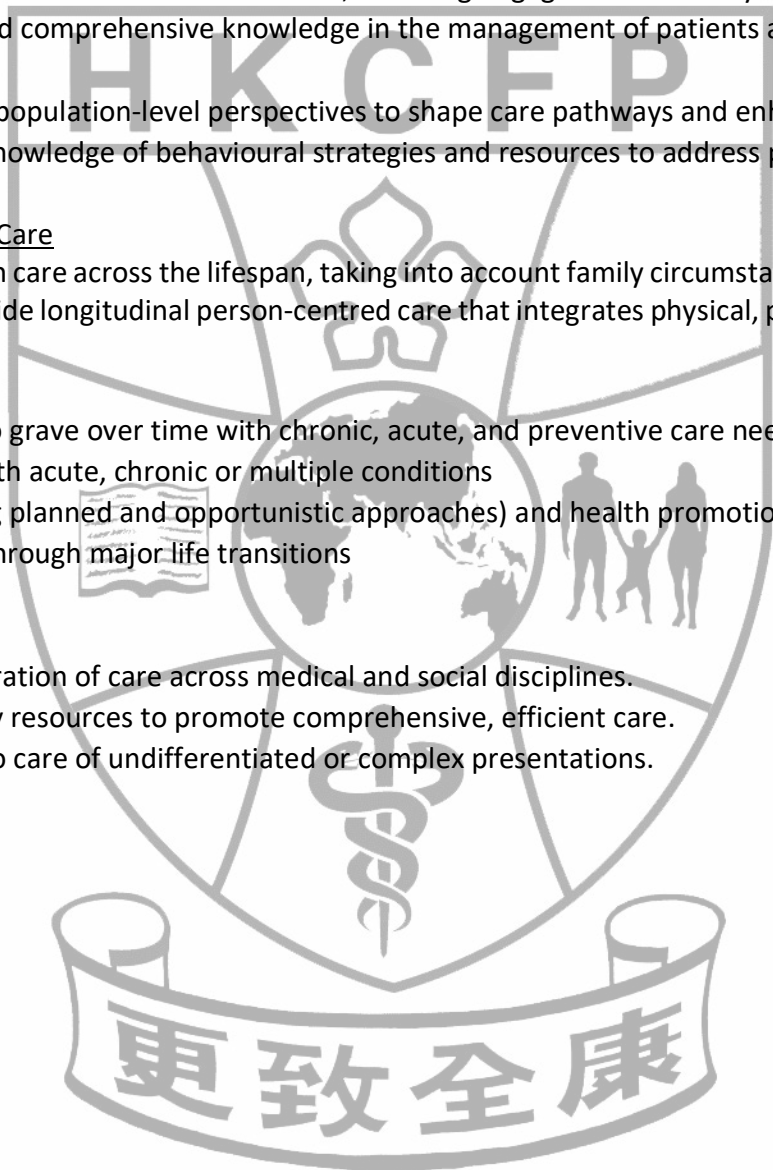
Family doctors provide whole-person care across the lifespan, taking into account family circumstances and other socio-demographic factors on their impact on health. They provide longitudinal person-centred care that integrates physical, psychological, and social aspects of health.

Core competencies include:

- ✓ Manage patients from cradle to grave over time with chronic, acute, and preventive care needs
- ✓ Coordinate care for patients with acute, chronic or multiple conditions
- ✓ Provide anticipatory care (using planned and opportunistic approaches) and health promotion
- ✓ Support patients and families through major life transitions

Specialist Level of Competencies

- ✓ Champion continuity and integration of care across medical and social disciplines.
- ✓ Utilize systemic and community resources to promote comprehensive, efficient care.
- ✓ Contribute scholarly insight into care of undifferentiated or complex presentations.



(5) Population and Community Health Orientation

Family doctors contribute not only to individual patient care but also to the broader community's health. The growing impact of public health challenges such as aging populations, emerging infectious diseases, multimorbidity and mental health requires them to engage beyond the clinic setting.

Core competencies include:

- ✓ Understand the social determinants of health
- ✓ Participate in health education, screening, and vaccination initiatives
- ✓ Respond to public health emergencies and outbreaks
- ✓ Advocate for wellbeing and healthcare equity
- ✓ Apply epidemiological knowledge to identify community health needs and trends

Specialist Level of Competencies

- ✓ Implement population-based health initiatives as part of opportunistic anticipatory care.
- ✓ Apply critical appraisal of evidence to design context-sensitive prevention strategies despite uncertainty and conflicting evidence to guide care.
- ✓ Implement comprehensive plans to maintain and promote health, incorporating pertinent psychosocial factors and other determinants of health

(6) Systems-Based Practice and Practice Management

Family doctors must know how to navigate healthcare systems and manage the operational side of primary care. This includes having the knowledge of healthcare policies, legal aspects of healthcare and the effective use of digital tools to enhance care.

Core competencies include:

- ✓ Understand healthcare systems and referral pathways in Hong Kong
- ✓ Use effective practice management processes and systems to continuously assure and improve quality and safety
- ✓ Manage time, resources, and practice workflows efficiently
- ✓ Utilize health records and digital health technologies effectively
- ✓ Comply with regulatory frameworks and professional standards
- ✓ Collaborate in multidisciplinary teams
- ✓ Balance cost, quality, and access in patient-centred practice

Specialist Level of Competencies

- ✓ Lead system-level quality assurance and improvements and advocates for equitable, efficient healthcare delivery.
- ✓ Analyse service models and fosters adaptability to population needs while maintaining accountability and sustainability.
- ✓ Role model and advocate for safe and effective transitions of care/hand-offs within and across health care delivery systems including outpatient settings
- ✓ Demonstrate skills required to identify, develop, implement, and analyse a quality improvement project



6. SUMMARY OF COMPETENCY PROGRESSION

The progression through Hong Kong College of Family Physicians training milestones follows a clear competency-based developmental trajectory:

DFM (Beginner): Safe independent practice with ability to handle essential primary care related tasks, focus on key problems, and make appropriate clinical judgments in community settings.

FHKCFP/FRACGP (Competent): Holistic patient care in biopsychosocial context, pattern recognition that appears intuitive, ability to supervise and guide junior doctors, functioning as counterparts to hospital specialists.

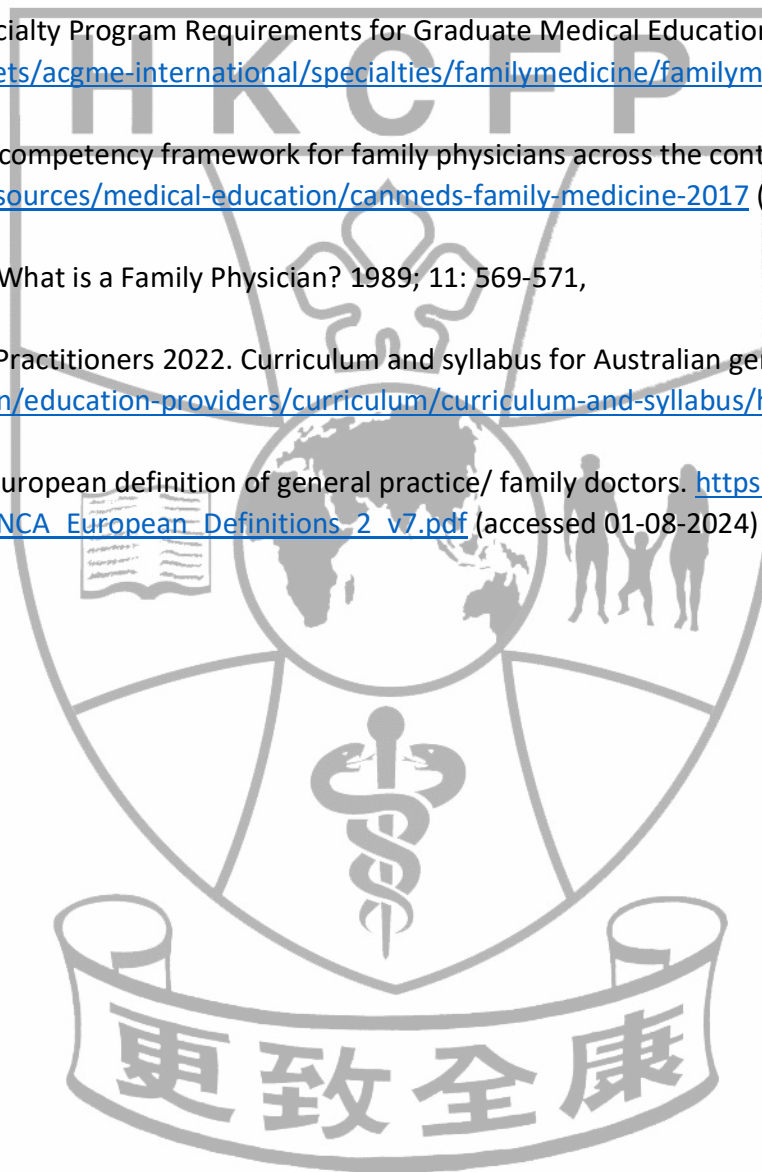
FHKAM (FM) (Specialist): Mastery-level competencies across all five HKCFP vocational training domains at Specialist Level Milestones, functioning as family medicine specialist capable of leading multidisciplinary initiatives, mentoring others, and advancing the specialty.

This framework ensures that family doctors in Hong Kong develop comprehensive competencies that include professionalism and ethics, person-centred care and interpersonal communication, clinical expertise, whole person and continuous care with community-orientation throughout their training journey.



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8. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Core Competencies of Family Doctors: A Locally Adapted Framework for Hong Kong

This framework presents a synthesis of international best practices in family medicine and aligns with the standards of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and WONCA. It has been contextualized to reflect the unique healthcare and cultural context and the population needs of Hong Kong.

Overview

Family doctors in Hong Kong practice in a diverse, multilingual society and they are expected to demonstrate a broad skill set consisting of clinical, interpersonal, ethical, and systemic competencies. This framework identifies **six core competency domains**, each being essential to the professional development and performance of family doctors. Trained family doctors should be competent in applying their knowledge and skills in a variety of clinical contexts. These contextual competencies are defined in the “Core Competencies and Contextual Units” document where specific competencies of 21 contextual units are described.

1. Professionalism and Leadership

Family doctors uphold rigorous standards of integrity and professionalism. They are committed to continuous learning and contribute to the profession through mentoring others and assuming healthcare leadership in clinic, community, professional organisation or government committee.

Core competencies include:

- Practice with integrity, honesty, and respect
- Apply ethical principles in complex clinical situations
- Reflect on one’s practice to foster growth and accountability
- Engage in ongoing professional development
- Contribute to clinical governance and quality improvement
- Teach, mentor, and contribute to academic and community-based research

2. Patient-Centred and Interpersonal Communication and Relationships

A trusting doctor-patient relationship with respectful communication is the foundation of family medicine. In Hong Kong’s multicultural society, family doctors must be able to engage with patients across different languages, cultures and generations.

Core competencies include:

- Build rapport and trust across diverse patient populations irrespective of age, gender and ethnicity
- Conduct consultations that respect patient values, preferences, and beliefs

- Explain medical issues clearly and facilitating shared decision-making
- Manage sensitive discussions (e.g. mental health, bad news delivery)
- Coordinate care through effective communication with other professionals

3. Clinical Expertise and Decision-Making

Having up-to-date clinical knowledge is essential to being a family doctor. Family doctors must be skilled in diagnosing and managing a wide range of health conditions across all age groups, including situations involving uncertainty.

Core competencies include:

- Gather and interpret relevant clinical information effectively and efficiently
- Perform relevant and respectful physical examinations
- Apply clinical reasoning to generate provisional and differential diagnoses
- Utilize evidence-based approaches to treatment planning
- Perform investigations and procedures appropriate to the primary care setting
- Recognize complex or serious conditions that require referral
- Manage undifferentiated symptoms, common illnesses, chronic diseases and multimorbidity

4. Whole-Person Care and Continuous Care

Family doctors provide whole-person care across the lifespan, taking into account family circumstances and other socio-demographic factors on their impact on health. They provide longitudinal person-centred care that integrates physical, psychological, and social aspects of health.

Core competencies include:

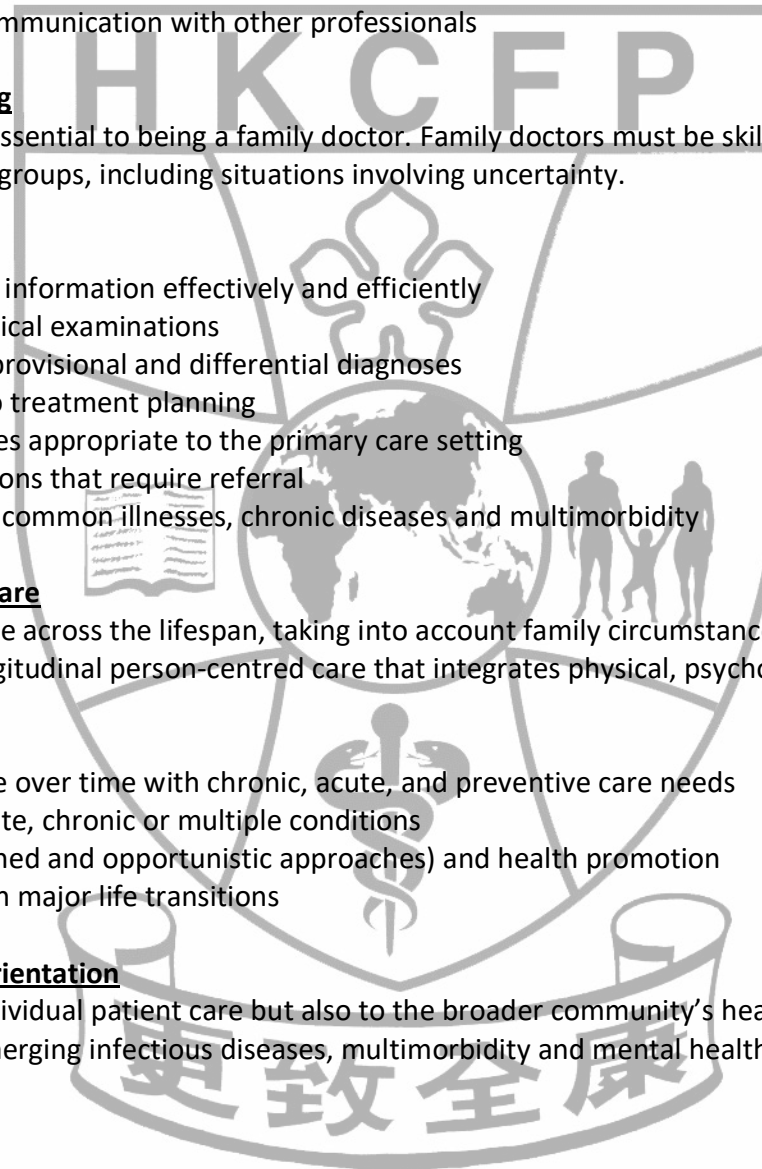
- Manage patients from cradle to grave over time with chronic, acute, and preventive care needs
- Coordinate care for patients with acute, chronic or multiple conditions
- Provide anticipatory care (using planned and opportunistic approaches) and health promotion
- Support patients and families through major life transitions

5. Population and Community Health Orientation

Family doctors contribute not only to individual patient care but also to the broader community's health. The growing impact of public health challenges such as aging populations, emerging infectious diseases, multimorbidity and mental health requires them to engage beyond the clinic setting.

Core competencies include:

- Understand the social determinants of health
- Participate in health education, screening, and vaccination and other preventive initiatives



- Respond to public health emergencies and outbreaks
- Advocate for wellbeing and healthcare equity
- Apply epidemiological knowledge to identify community health needs and trends

6. Systems-Based Practice and Practice Management

Family doctors must know how to navigate healthcare systems and manage the operational side of primary care. This includes having the knowledge of healthcare policies, legal aspects of healthcare and the effective use of digital tools to enhance care.

Core competencies include:

- Understand healthcare systems and referral pathways in Hong Kong
- Use effective practice management processes and systems to continuously assure and improve quality and safety
- Manage time, resources, and practice workflows efficiently
- Utilize health records and digital health technologies effectively
- Comply with regulatory frameworks and professional standards
- Collaborate in multidisciplinary teams
- Balance cost, quality, and access in patient-centred practice

Contextual Considerations for Hong Kong

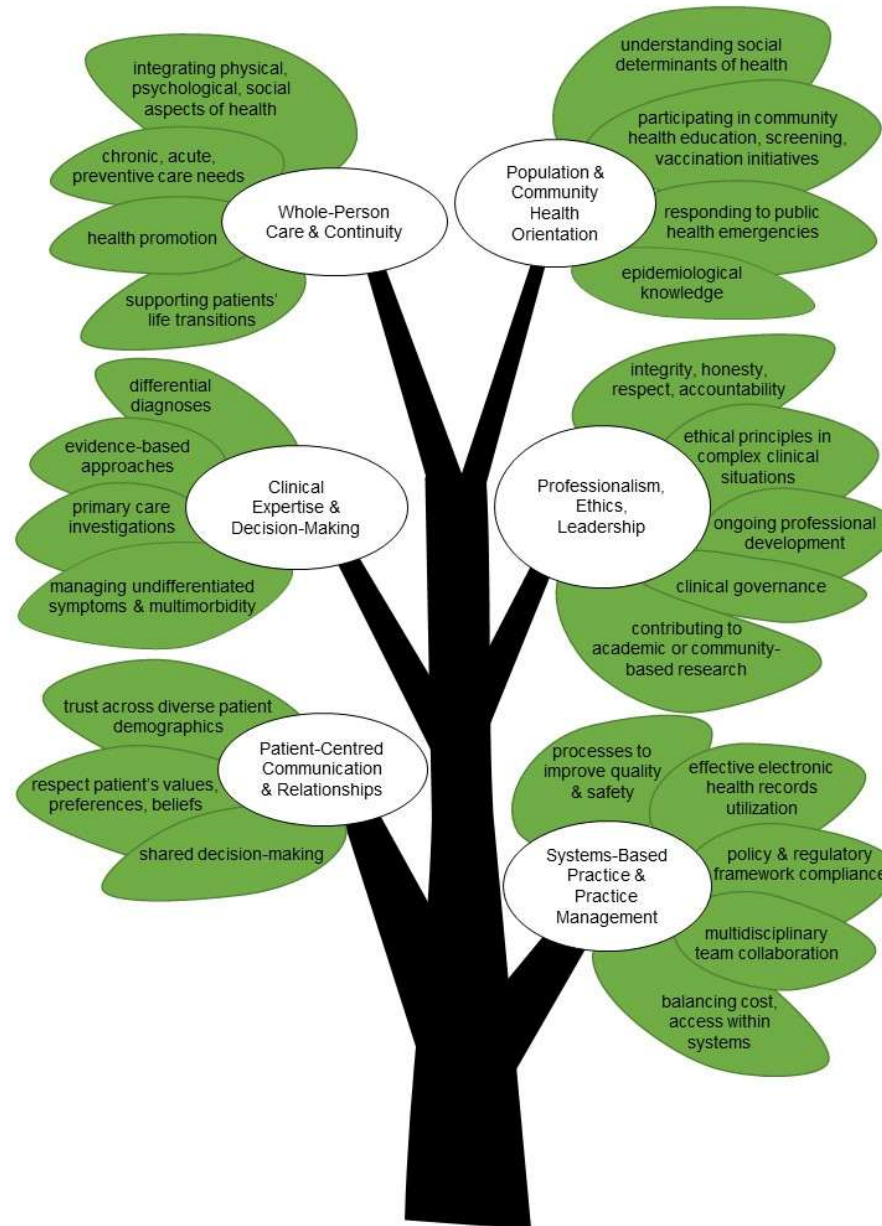
This competency framework has been deliberately adapted for the Hong Kong healthcare context in the following ways:

- **Navigating the dual public-private healthcare system**, including varying patient expectations and resource constraints
- **Managing common local health issues**, such as non-communicable diseases, infectious disease control, and ageing-related conditions (Please refer to “the core competencies and contextual units” document).
- **Compliance with Hong Kong’s medico-legal standards and guidelines** issued by the Medical Council of Hong Kong

Conclusion

This competency framework serves as a guide for the training, evaluation, and continuous development of family doctors in Hong Kong. While taking references from internationally recognized models, it is tailored to the social, cultural, and systemic contexts of local practice. The goal is to empower Hong Kong’s family doctors to deliver responsive, ethical, effective and patient-centred care to individuals, families, and communities.

Appendix 2. The Tree of Family Medicine Competencies



Appendix 3. The Hong Kong College of Family Physicians Training and Levels of Competence

1. Professionalism and Leadership

DFM level: Beginner Level	FHKCFP/FRACGP: Competent Level	FHKAM (FM): Family Medicine Specialist Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibits professional behaviour and integrity in routine contexts. • Acknowledges ethical duties and seeks supervision in dilemmas. • Completes professional tasks with reliability and respect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates professionalism in demanding or complex circumstances. • Analyzes complex ethical situations and manages them appropriately. • Provides role-modelling in responsibility and teamwork. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipates professionalism challenges at individual and system levels. • Manages and mentors others in ethical reasoning and assuring professional standards. • Balances organisational responsibilities with patient advocacy and care quality. • Expands the knowledge base of family medicine through dissemination of original research • Represents Family Medicine in Government Boards and Committees • Serves as trainers, examiners and committee members of the Hong Kong College of Family Physicians

2. Patient-Centred and Interpersonal Communication and Relationships

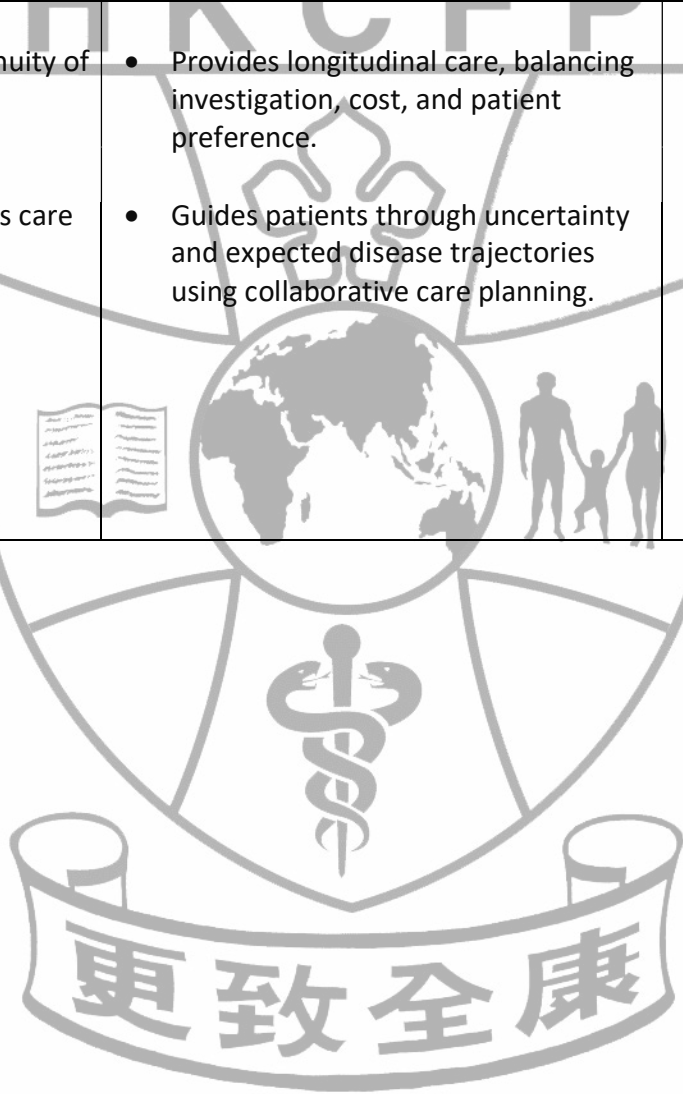
DFM level: Beginner Level	FHKCFP/FRACGP: Competent Level	FHKAM (FM): Family Medicine Specialist Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates basic ability to establish rapport and conduct patient-centred consultations. • Recognizes common communication barriers (e.g., health literacy) and seeks to overcome them • Organizes and initiates communication, sets the agenda, clarifies expectations, and verifies understanding • Communicates clearly within the healthcare team and maintains accurate, timely and confidential patient documentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages complex or emotionally charged interactions effectively • Reflects on personal biases that may influence communication • Utilizes empathy and shared decision-making and align care with patient values • Provides constructive feedback to peers and learners • Uses patient record to communicate updated and concise information in an organized format • Uses appropriate channels to raise system concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustains trusting relationships across the continuum of care, regardless of complexity. • Works with families effectively, including conducting family interviews • Anticipates communication barriers and addresses them proactively • Independently utilizes shared decision making to align patient/family values, goals, and preferences with treatment options to make a personalized care plan • Leads multidisciplinary dialogue, coordinates care recommendations across teams, and models professionalism in feedback and system improvement discussions. • Demonstrates efficiency in documenting patient encounters and updating record

3. Clinical Expertise and Decision-Making

DFM level: Beginner Level	FHKCFP/FRACGP: Competent Level	FHKAM (FM): Family Medicine Specialist Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulates differential diagnoses for common acute and chronic conditions. • Applies clinical guidelines and protocols appropriately. • Recognizes psychosocial influences on illness and considers patient context in decision-making. • Generates differential diagnosis for acute presentations • Applies medical knowledge for treatment of patients with common conditions across the lifespan irrespective of sex, age and socio-economic status • Identifies behavioral strategies to improve health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages increasingly complex cases and balances competing clinical priorities. • Integrates psychosocial, cultural, and family factors into management. • Demonstrates structured clinical reasoning and begins to identify and mitigate diagnostic biases. • Develops collaborative goals of care and engages the patient in self-management of chronic conditions • Develops a prioritized differential diagnosis for complex presentations • Demonstrates knowledge of complex clinical problems and offers comprehensive management of patients across the lifespan irrespective of sex, age and socio-economic status • Engages in learning behavioral strategies to address patient care needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leads multidisciplinary responses to complex acute or chronic presentations. • Independently coordinates care for acutely ill patients with complex histories and comorbidities • Formulates individualised management plans for acute illness taking into account complex psychosocial factors and patient preferences • Facilitates efforts at self-management of chronic conditions, including engagement of family and community resources • Integrates clinical experience and comprehensive knowledge in the management of patients across the lifespan irrespective of sex, age and socio-economic status • Uses evidence, experience, and population-level perspectives to shape care pathways and enhance quality of practice. • Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge of behavioral strategies and resources to address patient’s needs

4. Whole-Person Care and Continuous Care

DFM level: Beginner Level	FHKCFP/FRACGP: Competent Level	FHKAM (FM): Family Medicine Specialist Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognizes the importance of continuity of care and is comfortable managing undifferentiated problems• Maintains follow-up and coordinates care transitions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides longitudinal care, balancing investigation, cost, and patient preference.• Guides patients through uncertainty and expected disease trajectories using collaborative care planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Champions continuity and integration of care across medical and social disciplines.• Utilizes systemic and community resources to promote comprehensive, efficient care.• Contributes scholarly insight into care of undifferentiated or complex presentations.



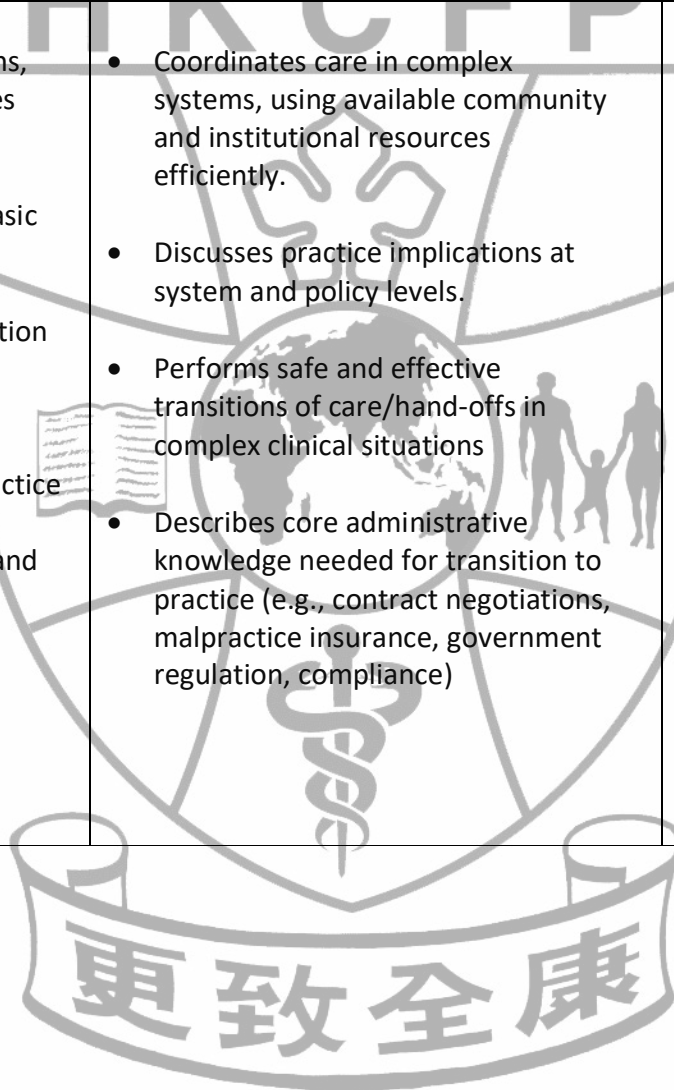
5. Population and Community Orientation

DFM level: Beginner Level	FHKCFP/FRACGP: Competent Level	FHKAM (FM): Family Medicine Specialist Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies opportunities for preventive care and health promotion. Knows where to find screening guidelines and basic epidemiological evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implements prevention strategies through shared decision-making, addressing barriers to access. Integrates community and behavioural approaches within patient care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implements population-based health initiatives as part of opportunistic anticipatory care. Applies critical appraisal of evidence to design context-sensitive prevention strategies despite uncertainty and conflicting evidence to guide care. Implements comprehensive plans to maintain and promote health, incorporating pertinent psychosocial factors and other determinants of health



6. Systems-Based Practice and Practice Management

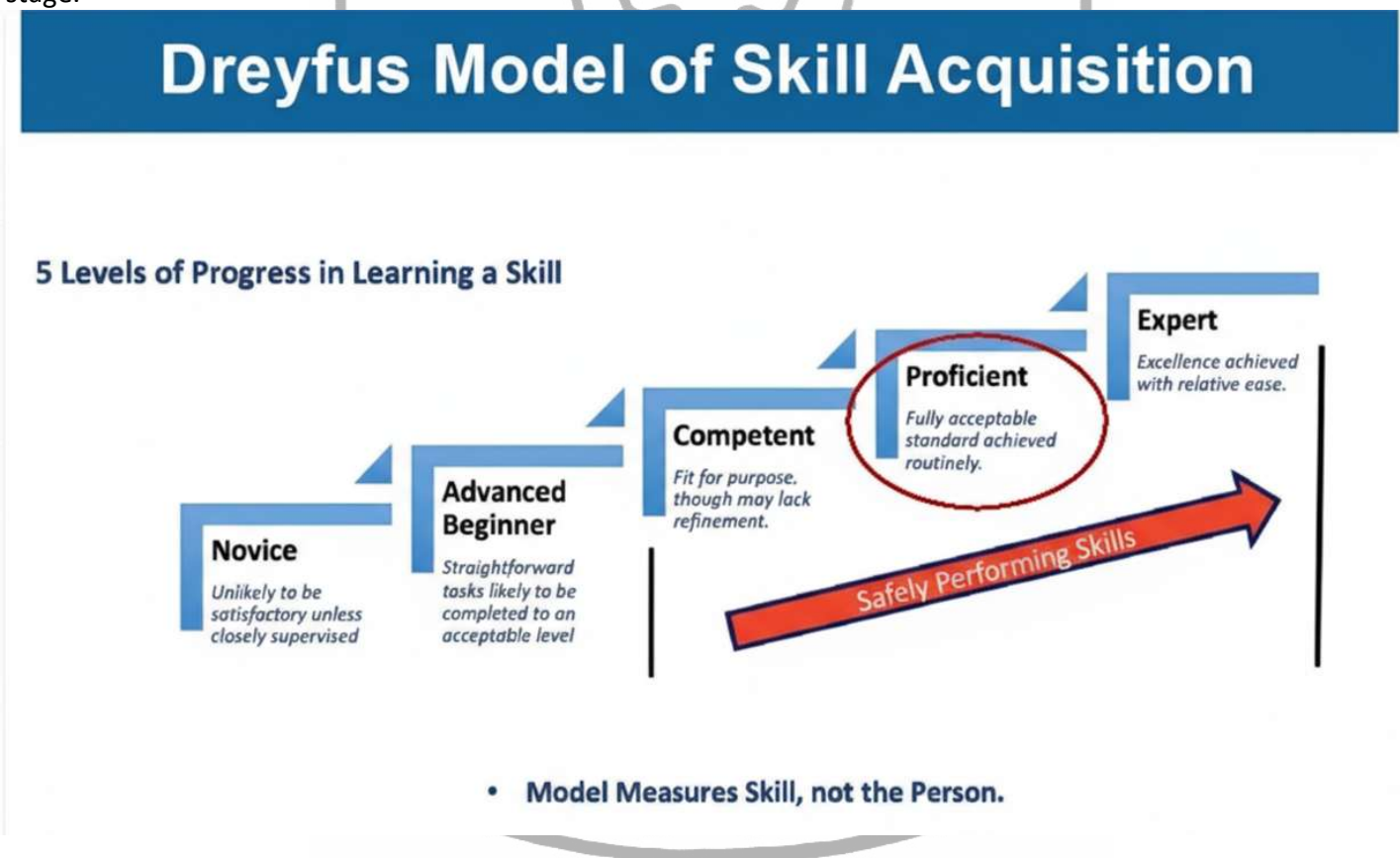
DFM level: Beginner Level	FHKCFP/FRACGP: Competent Level	FHKAM (FM): Family Medicine Specialist Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands how healthcare systems, financing, and interprofessional roles influence care delivery. • Demonstrates safe handover and basic use of clinical information systems. • Demonstrates knowledge of population and community health needs • Demonstrates use of information technology required for medical practice (e.g., electronic health record, documentation required for billing and coding) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinates care in complex systems, using available community and institutional resources efficiently. • Discusses practice implications at system and policy levels. • Performs safe and effective transitions of care/hand-offs in complex clinical situations • Describes core administrative knowledge needed for transition to practice (e.g., contract negotiations, malpractice insurance, government regulation, compliance) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leads system-level quality assurance and improvements and advocates for equitable, efficient healthcare delivery. • Analyses service models and fosters adaptability to population needs while maintaining accountability and sustainability. • Role models and advocates for safe and effective transitions of care/hand-offs within and across health care delivery systems including outpatient settings • Demonstrate skills required to identify, develop, implement and analyse a quality improvement project



Appendix 4: The Dreyfus Model of Skill Acquisition

The Dreyfus model of skill acquisition is a widely-recognized framework that describes how individuals progress from beginner to expert when learning new skills. The fundamental premise of the Dreyfus model is that skill development involves a transformation from rigid rule-following to intuitive, experience-based performance. As learners gain experience, they gradually move away from conscious application of rules and procedures toward fluid, automatic responses based on pattern recognition and holistic understanding of situations.

The Dreyfus model has important implications for education, training, and professional development. It suggests that different stages of skill acquisition require different types of instruction and support. Novices benefit from clear rules and structured guidance, while experts need autonomy and opportunities for intuitive practice. The model helps educators, managers, and coaches tailor their approach based on learners' developmental stage.



Adapted from: The Importance of Proficiency in Robotic Surgery and the Training Implications 2016.

<https://mimicsimulation.com/the-importance-of-proficiency-in-robotic-surgery-and-the-training-implications/>

Appendix 5: Definition of Family Doctors

Definition of Family Doctors (Lam, 1989)

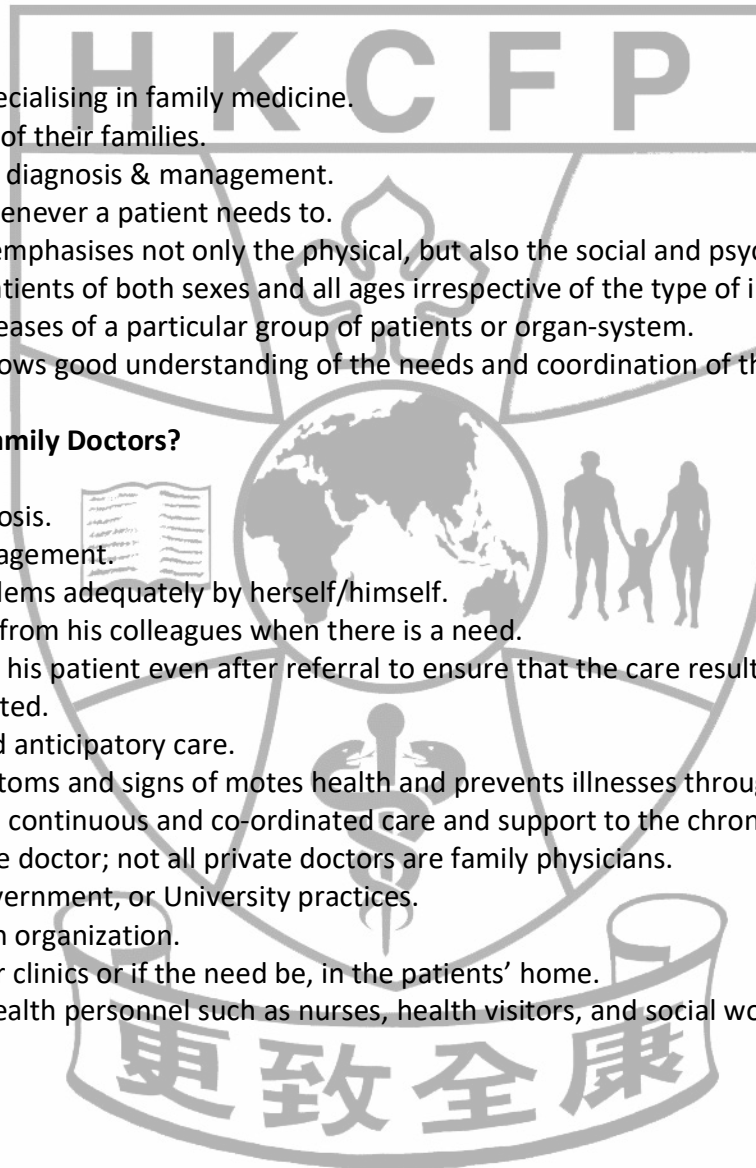
Family Doctors:

- are registered medical doctors specialising in family medicine.
- care for individuals and members of their families.
- take the family into account in his diagnosis & management.
- are the first doctors to consult whenever a patient needs to.
- provide total care in that she/he emphasises not only the physical, but also the social and psychological aspects of health.
- provide comprehensive care to patients of both sexes and all ages irrespective of the type of illness.
- do not limit his service to only diseases of a particular group of patients or organ-system.
- provide continuous care which allows good understanding of the needs and coordination of the care of the patient.

What kind of services are provided by Family Doctors?

Family doctors

- make an early and accurate diagnosis.
- recommend the appropriate management.
- deal with most of the health problems adequately by herself/himself.
- are able to seek appropriate help from his colleagues when there is a need.
- retain the overall responsibility of his patient even after referral to ensure that the care resulted from the referral is appropriate and the other health needs are not neglected.
- provide education, preventive and anticipatory care.
- screen for risk factors, early symptoms and signs of mores health and prevents illnesses through health
- are in the best position to provide continuous and co-ordinated care and support to the chronically ill.
- are not synonymous with a private doctor; not all private doctors are family physicians.
- may be in private, subvented, Government, or University practices.
- may work in a clinic, hospital or an organization.
- may care for their patients in their clinics or if the need be, in the patients' home.
- often work together with other health personnel such as nurses, health visitors, and social workers in a team in order to meet the needs of their patients.



9. Acknowledgement

The Hong Kong College of Family Physicians (HKCFP) published the official document entitled “Core Competencies of Family Doctors in Hong Kong” in the March 2026 issue of The Hong Kong Practitioner. This important document articulates the central role and functions of family doctors, outlines the expected competencies at each milestone of family medicine training, and provides detailed descriptions of the six core competency domains.

The College extends its sincere appreciation to the expert group for their dedication, professionalism, and invaluable contributions to the development of this timely and authoritative document.

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