



Hospital Authority Convention 2016
Welcome Address by
Professor John CY Leong, Chairman of Hospital Authority
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Chief Executive (Chief Executive, The Honourable C Y Leung), Minister Wang (Vice Minister of the National Health and Family Planning Commission, Professor Wang Guo-qiang), Dr Ko (Secretary for Food and Health, Dr Ko Wing-man), distinguished guests and attendees – good morning.

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to this year's Hospital Authority Convention, particularly those of you who have travelled here from mainland China and overseas to share your experience, wisdom and ideas.

Over the past quarter of a century, HA has helped millions of people in Hong Kong regain and maintain good health. According to the findings of the Patient Experience and Satisfaction Survey on Specialist Outpatient Service released in September last year, an average overall experience of 7.7 on a 10-point scale was noted. In 2014, we also obtained encouraging findings from discharged inpatients, with 86% rated their overall inpatient experience as 'Good' – equivalent to 7 and above out of 10. Such outstanding performances are only possible with the concerted efforts of the entire HA workforce.

Healthcare providers worldwide are facing great challenges. Changing demographics and technological advances are creating new possibilities but, at the same time, new medical and ethical problems.

The rise of globalisation is helping to bring people around the world closer together and facilitating the exchange of information and ideas, but also adding to the danger of serious communicable diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and, recently, the Zika virus. As an open economy, Hong Kong cannot isolate itself from these external risks to health. At the same time, chronic diseases are also on the rise, particularly among populations in more

advanced economies.

In 2015-16, HA handled 1.7 million inpatient and day inpatient discharges and deaths, accounting for about 90% of inpatient healthcare needs in Hong Kong. This number is about 1.4 times greater than the situation shortly after HA was established. Similarly, a total of 2.2 million accident & emergency attendances were recorded last year, up 57% compared over the same period.

Factors including Hong Kong's ageing population are likely to result in the continuing growth in demand for public healthcare services in our city. In the past 15 years, capacity in terms of institutions and bed numbers in HA has only noted a marginal growth. Against this backdrop, we are particularly grateful that the Government has earmarked HK\$200 billion (US\$25.6 billion) for a 10-year hospital development plan to enable HA to expand and upgrade its healthcare facilities. With this mega plan, we expect to add an additional 5,000 beds and around 90 new operating theatres within the next decade – up 18% and 40% respectively compared with our current capacity.

Examples of new ideas in planning for facilities development in the future include when constructing new hospitals or redeveloping existing facilities, to have rehabilitation blocks linked to acute inpatient wards to allow the prompt transfer of stable patients from acute wards to rehabilitation facilities. Adopting appropriate new technologies, such as minimally invasive surgical techniques will help significantly expand our service capacity by reducing the length of inpatient stays.

A higher level of healthcare will involve rebalancing the mix of healthcare services, adopting new care delivery models and enhancing the clinical skills of healthcare workers. HA is continuing to strengthen its clinical workforce, including through recruiting more local medical, nursing and allied health graduates, and encouraging retirees to rejoin HA to address pressing needs for additional manpower and expertise. HA is also forging ahead with proactive efforts to strengthen specialist training for young doctors and ensure experienced doctors continue to hone and expand their skills.

The Hong Kong SAR Government has continued to offer its steadfast support providing a steady increase in funding for HA. This year, in the face of a slowing economy, we are grateful that a financial provision of HK\$51.6 billion (US\$6.6 billion) has been made available to HA. This coupled with HA's own income and redeployment of its internal resources will enable HA to implement measures to meet the rising demand for hospital services.

Comparing notes with experts on healthcare issues from outside Hong Kong helps broaden our perspective of public health. Over the next two days, healthcare professionals will have opportunities to foster closer connections with their counterparts at home and overseas, and to strengthen the interdisciplinary ties.

I wish to express my appreciation to all HA staff for their continuing dedication to enhancing their professional skills and expertise, and for their valuable contributions to ensuring HA remains an effective and efficient public healthcare service system. I also offer my thanks to the Hong Kong SAR Government for its strong policy and funding support for HA over the years.

HA is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. To mark this important milestone, I formally announce the launch of a special commemorative item - our new corporate tie and scarf!

I wish this year's Convention the greatest success and our guests from overseas an enjoyable stay in Hong Kong. I am sure all attendees will be greatly inspired by the experience.

Thank you.