

Acceptance Speech

Today, I am honored to be able to deliver this acceptance speech on behalf of the distinguished honorary fellows of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), including Mr Charlie Lee, Mr William Lee and Mr Denny Wong. We are truly grateful for the conferment of honorary fellowships by CUHK.

The Chinese University of Hong Kong dedicates itself to the nurturing of talent and the cause of education, and the accomplishments of its holistic development speak louder than words. CUHK's commitment to whole-person development has won wide acclaim, and the University's active promotion of entrepreneurship education has seen it launch Hong Kong's first-ever minor programme in entrepreneurship and innovation. Apart from its emphasis on quality education, CUHK also recognises the importance of social responsibility. Teaching staff and students alike frequently participate in community outreach activities, for example, the poverty alleviation initiatives offered by the I · CARE programme. They also organised over 30 health education and medical service projects to help raise health awareness among the underprivileged. CUHK has made significant contributions to Hong Kong's medical services. As one of the two local universities with a medical faculty, its medical training is precisely what the Hong Kong community needs. Upon completion, the CUHK Medical Centre will mark a major step forward for Hong Kong's healthcare services.

Thirty years ago, I assisted Dr Lee Shau-kee in the construction of Union Hospital in Tai Wai, and this led to my partnership of over 20 years

with CUHK. In 1994, Professor Arthur Li Kwok-cheung, then Dean of the Faculty of Medicine of CUHK, was invited to join the Preparatory Committee and the Management Committee of Union Hospital, and the contributions made by Professor Li had been great and many. Since then, Union Hospital and the Faculty of Medicine of CUHK have been collaborating in different areas. When SARS hit Hong Kong in 2003, Union Hospital lent its operating theatres to CUHK professors and the medical staff of Prince of Wales Hospital to conduct coronary artery bypass surgeries and other operations. Over the years, CUHK professors have been invited to conduct medical training and exchange sessions at Union Hospital, thereby enhancing the quality of its services in otorhinolaryngology, surgery, oncology, obstetrics and gynaecology, sports medicine, etc. The teaching and research staff of CUHK are resourceful and innovative, and their research impressive and plentiful. One example is the research conducted by Professor Joseph Sung Jao-yiu on Crohn's Disease and ulcerative colitis. In March, the Department of Surgery of CUHK performed Asia-Pacific's first-ever non-invasive Bronchoscopic Microwave Ablation (BMA) to treat lung cancer. Union Hospital takes pride on its collaboration with the University, which benefits both the Hospital and the public at large.

Operating a hospital is costly and the return is low. However; it is a meaningful task from a social point of view. According to the Census and Statistics Department of Hong Kong, the population aged 65 or above will increase from last year's 1.3 million to 2.5 million in 2039. Since the demand for

hospital beds of those aged 65 or above is around four times that of those below 65, the demand for hospital beds by 2039, compared to 2018, is expected to increase by almost 40%. An ageing population, coupled with population growth, is the main cause accounting for keen demands for medical services. Such problems can be remedied in part by a parallel development of public and private medical services. Currently, the low charges at government hospitals have attracted over 80% of the population to choose public in-patient services, and it often takes more than one year before a patient can receive specialist treatment. To relieve the manpower shortage in public hospitals and to shorten patients' waiting time, the government should draw on the examples of other regions (such as Australia) to systematically refer non-urgent patients to private or semi-private hospitals. Medical expenses should be covered by insurance to alleviate the pressure on public hospitals. I believe the government is heading in a similar direction, and the CUHK Medical Centre will shed light on the effectiveness.

I would like to extend my best wishes to the University for the successful establishment of the Medical Centre. I also wish that the University will grow from strength to strength. Thank you.

*This acceptance speech is delivered by Dr Lam Ko-yin Colin
on behalf of all Honorary Fellows*