

Director's Message

By Professor Vincent H.L. Lee

"A sufficient number of clinical practice and science oriented trained students... may have a significant impact, not only on patient care, but on the Hong Kong economy as well."

Remarks from Professor Leslie Benet, 2010-2011 External Examiner

It has been another fast paced, productive academic year for the CUHK School of Pharmacy. As can be seen elsewhere in this issue, the School was gearing up for a number of important changes in the next academic year and beyond.

First, with the staunch support of Dean Fok, Provost Wah, and Vice Chancellor Sung, the intake of pharmacy students will be increased after 20 years, beginning with the 2012 intake. We believe such an increase will enable the broadening of experiential learning for our talented students and meet the rising demand for pharmacist services in Hong Kong. With the anticipated increase in human resources tied to the increase in student intake, we hope to implement critical hires in emerging areas, thereby creating a critical mass to launch a multidisciplinary research program in accelerated drug discovery and delivery for special patient populations, notably the elderly.

Second, the School has finalized a four-year curriculum for implementation in 2012. A key feature of the new curriculum is engagement of the students in more active, self-directed and team-based experiential learning and better integration of the basic and clinical sciences. In addition, the new curriculum offers a fairly wide range of experiential clerkships in the fourth year, with the expectation that the School will be able to partner with new prospective practice sites beyond the present Hospital Authority.

Third, the School will be relocated to a new 8-storey building, Lo Kwee-Seong Integrated Biomedical Sciences Building, north of CUHK campus. This new beginning rekindles our pioneering spirit and challenges us to think creatively in configuring space to maximize collaborative post-graduate education and research. The proximity of the building to the Science and Technology Park would be attractive to the entrepreneurial postgraduate students and academic staff.

The timing of these three prospective changes cannot be better. It coincides with the School's 20th anniversary. We will kick off the celebration with the expanded version of the White Coat Ceremony on 22 September, 2011 and conclude with the 12th Asian Conference on Clinical Pharmacy on 7 to 9 July, 2012. An important goal of the celebration is to raise funds for scholarships to attract outstanding undergraduate and postgraduate students and for stimulating research in pharmaceutical innovations that will advance the budding pharmaceutical industry in the Pearl River Delta.



Professor Leslie Benet (first row, seventh from the left) posing with the 2011 pharmacy graduates.

Let me conclude by paraphrasing Professor Leslie Benet, our external examiner for this academic year, who stated in his report, "... There is exceptional potential for the School of Pharmacy at CUHK to have a marked impact in both the pharmacy profession and the development of pharmaceutical companies. ... A sufficient number of clinical practice and science oriented trained students... may have a significant impact, not only on patient care, but on the Hong Kong economy as well." We will strive to meet his challenge as a pace-setting school of pharmacy by our 25th anniversary.

The College of Pharmacy Practice

*By Dr. Benjamin SC LEE,
Vice Chairman of The College of Pharmacy Practice*

It is an annual ritual. In July, we witnessed the 16th batch of graduates from the School of Pharmacy (SOP) qualifying as pharmacists in Hong Kong. The SOP graduates have played an active role in evolving the pharmacy profession in Hong Kong significantly during all these years. There are ample opportunities for us to contribute our drug expertise in achieving even better health care, especially with the anticipated expansion in pharmacy student enrollment in the years to come. The profession must continue to grow in depth as well as breadth in knowledge and skills in order to stand up to the challenges posed by the ever increasing complexity of patient needs. Under the visionary leadership of Professor Vincent Lee and Professor Kenneth Lee, The College of Pharmacy Practice was established in September 2010 to support local pharmacists in advancing their scope of practice.

The College was structured as an independent, internationally recognized professional body with a mandate to provide specialist training to pharmacists. By ensuring the competency of pharmacists in various practice areas, the College expects that the professional image of pharmacists will be enhanced and the public recognition of the profession will be increased. The fifteen founding members came from different practice sectors and professional generations, with five of them being SOP graduates.

An open forum was organized on 25 Feb 2011 to introduce the structure and share the vision of the College with colleagues. It was attended by about 40 pharmacists, and many participants encouraged the College to swiftly lead the transformation of pharmacy practice in step with a changing health care system. Good suggestions were received particularly on topics of specialty training areas. On the basis of these suggestions and related discussions at the forum, an on-line survey was developed and launched. The survey will remain open until the end of September. The results will be analyzed with the objective to establish a framework for a curriculum of specialty training consistent with the collective view of the responders.

Our long-term vision for the College is to establish itself as an independent accreditation and recognizable professional titles granting authority for the pharmacy profession in Hong Kong, including the election of fellows who are pharmacists at the forefront of pharmaceutical care. We need your support in achieving this important goal for the profession and for making a healthier Hong Kong a reality.

20th Anniversary Celebration



In a blink, two decades have gone by, and the School has planned an array of student-directed, patient-centered activities to mark this milestone of the School. "Professional Advancement, Clinical Excellence", PACE in short, is the theme of our 20th anniversary celebration. The School takes pride in the more than 500 pharmacist graduates it has the privilege to educate. These graduates have the knowledge and skills to advance healthcare in Hong Kong by meeting the patients' needs with quality service as measured by the stringent standards of clinical excellence across all practice settings.

The events that have been planned are designed to illustrate the expanded role of pharmacists and the expanded portfolio of advanced educational offerings that the School has developed for enhancing professional advancement to achieve clinical excellence.

Details of the yearlong celebration are as follows:

Year 2011

September 22	White Coat Ceremony
October 15	Lecture on Cardiovascular Diseases
November 19 – 20	Pharmacy Exhibition
December 17	Public Lecture on Health Supplements

Year 2012

January (TBC)	Radio Interviews
July 7 – 9	The 12 th Asian Conference on Clinical Pharmacy

Photo Story

The School of Pharmacy actively participated in the Fun Run and Chung Chi College Carnival

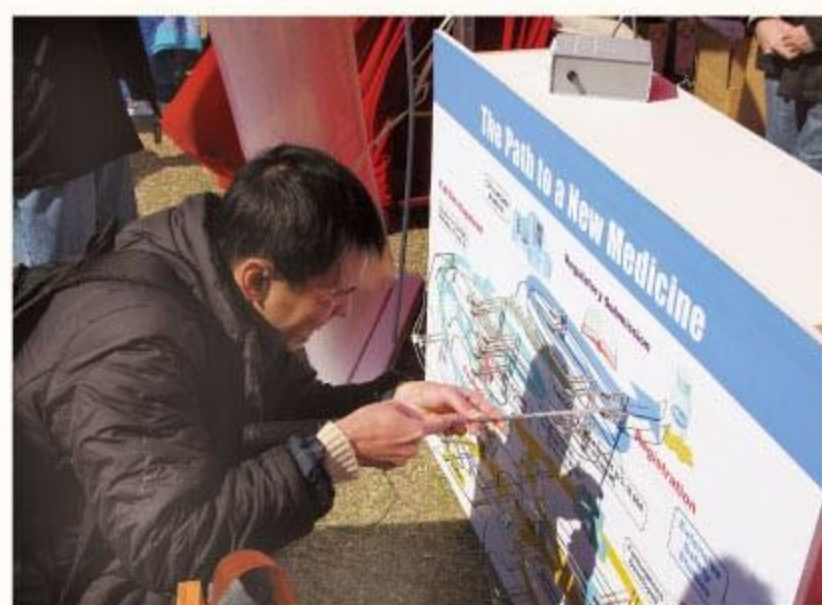
On 15 January 2011, the School of Pharmacy participated in the 10th Anniversary Fun Run and in the joint celebration of the 60th Anniversary of Chung Chi College and the 30th Anniversary of Faculty of Medicine. The 5km Fun Run started at the Prince of Wales Hospital and finished at the Lingnan Stadium, where the celebration carnival was held. There over 1,000 participants cheered the fun runners. More than 30 staff and students from our School took part in the Fun Run and also organized a game booth around three themes: Hospital, Community and Industrial Pharmacist.



The Carnival was held at the Lingnan Stadium.



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The School of Pharmacy organized a game booth around three themes: Hospital, Community and Industrial Pharmacist.

New Staff



"How can novel, computational, methods enable therapeutic advances, optimization, and individualization?"

By Professor Teddy Lam

Professor Teddy Lam joined the School of Pharmacy in July 2011. He completed the unique combined PharmD/PhD programme at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), receiving his PharmD in 2004 and PhD in Pharmaceutical Sciences and Pharmacogenomics in 2010. Besides research, he practiced as a clinical pharmacist at Kaiser Permanente Redwood City Medical Center (California, USA), which is an acute-care hospital with specialized care in neuroscience and neurosurgery.

Teddy's interdisciplinary research centres on the intersection of quantitative pharmacology, therapeutic engineering and computational modelling and simulation (M&S). The central questions driving his research are: How do we gain deeper, mechanistic insights in pharmacology, in complex diseases like cancer? How do we integrate and leverage that knowledge to develop better drugs faster and smarter? How can novel, computational, scientific M&S methods help achieve those goals and enable therapeutic advances, optimization, and individualization? The long-term objective is to build virtual tissues, organs, and patients that become informative virtual laboratories, and use them to predict drug response and disposition.

Teddy is not new to CUHK: back in 1995, he was treated in Prince of Wales Hospital Lady Pao Children's Cancer Centre, where he found his lifelong interests in pharmacy. He is excited to have the opportunity to work together with those same doctors, and make a positive impact to patients.

Professional Development and Appreciation Day for Adjunct Teachers 2011

By Dr. Susan Ho

The School of Pharmacy of the Chinese University of Hong Kong organized a "Professional Development and Appreciation Day for Adjunct Teachers" on Saturday, 28 May 2011. The event was dedicated to the adjunct teachers who have made generous, invaluable contributions to the Pharmacy programme. Over thirty practising pharmacists and pharmacy teachers attended the half-day event held in the CUHK Shatin campus.



As a start, Carmel McNaught of the CUHK Centre for Learning Enhancement And Research (CLEAR) delivered a seminar and workshop on "Strategies for ensuring student engagement and effective learning in the practice setting". After an initial overview of the outcomes-based approaches to teaching and learning, the audience participated in small group discussions on how the learning outcomes of the Pharmacy programme can be acquired and strengthened by the practical Pharmacy experiences provided by the adjunct teachers. The ideas generated by the groups were reported back to the audience and written up for their future reference.

Mr. Donald Chong, a long-serving adjunct teacher, then shared his personal experience as an adjunct tutor in a session entitled "From a student to a practitioner". His enthusiasm hopefully had motivated others to realize that serving as an adjunct teacher can be a rewarding and educational experience.

At the closing, Dr. Susan Ho (Associate Director) provided a curriculum update on "The new 4-year BPharm curriculum and its impact on future pharmacy clerkships". This was followed by breakout group discussions between the CUHK course coordinators and the adjunct teachers to obtain feedback and suggestions on the current and future course/clerkship arrangements.

The participants found the event to be a good platform for interacting with the faculty and for meeting and sharing with other adjunct teachers. Based on the positive response from the participants, the School will organize similar events in the future and is looking forward to active participation from the adjunct teachers.

In summary, the School of Pharmacy is very thankful to all the adjunct teachers for their dedication and valuable contributions to the Pharmacy programme!

From The Alumni



"To better equip the future pharmacists, early exposure to different settings and understanding of the role of pharmacist in different levels are vital. I am grateful to the School of Pharmacy for granting me an opportunity as adjunct tutor."

By Ms Jennifer Wong, Adjunct Tutor

I was among the first few batches of pharmacy graduates from CUHK and I think I can say we were the "pioneers". By the time I completed the 3-year undergraduate training, we had limited exposure to pharmacy practice in different sectors. We relied on our own perceived interests and imagination in choosing a career pathway.

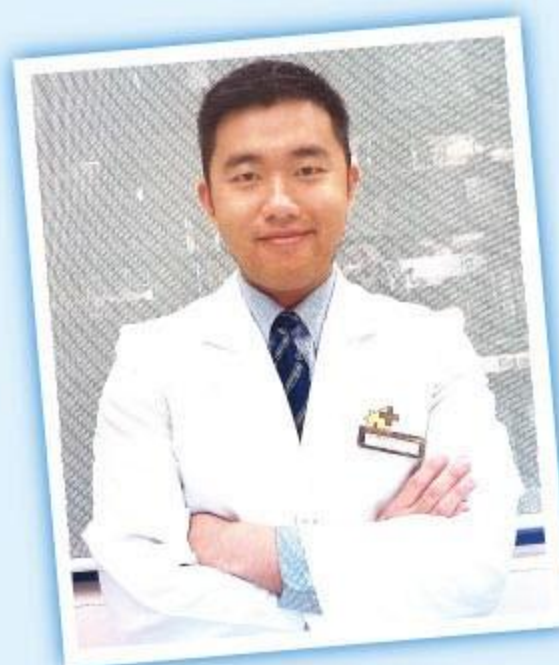
I was pleased to learn that CUHK established a clinical pharmacy clerkship program in 2002, whereby pharmacy students experienced pharmacy practice at various settings. As one of the team members at PWH, the designated teaching hospital of CUHK, I was appointed as adjunct tutor. My role was to share with students about formulary management and drug evaluation.

We routinely receive requests of adding new drugs or special items to the drug formulary. Maintaining a rational and cost-effective drug formulary, based on drug efficacy, safety and cost implication is of great importance. As a pharmacist, how we can contribute by integrating our knowledge, assessing information and making professional recommendation is the area that I have been sharing with students.

In my session, all students are given a 3-hr lecture on the formulary system in HA hospitals, the workflow of applying and endorsing a new drug and the role of pharmacist. They are then assigned a new drug for evaluation. This may include listing its profile, comparing the new drug to existing alternatives with reference to the evidence available, analyzing cost-effectiveness implication, and suggesting the place in therapy and guideline for use.

I am always impressed with the talent, enthusiasm and dedication of my students. All of them are so well-trained that their sophisticated skills in searching drug information, meticulous evaluation and professional recommendation are highly commended. I also enjoyed the interactive discussions and sharing with them. I not only shared with them the challenges in real-life practice, but also learned from them the latest search engines, the most updated guidelines as well as their perception / lateral thinking.

There are various career pathways for pharmacy graduates, and pharmacists at different workplaces can make an important contribution to the healthcare system. To better equip the future pharmacists, early exposure to different settings and understanding of the role of pharmacist at different levels are vital. I am grateful to the School of Pharmacy for the opportunity to serve as an adjunct tutor. I also believe that more sharing of the invaluable experience with other pharmacists can further benefit our future colleagues and facilitate the advancement of the pharmacy profession in Hong Kong.



"I believe apprenticeship is the suitable mode for students as it's not just the passing of knowledge, but also the development of professional ethics and values and helping students to learn from their mistakes under supervision."

By Mr Suki SO, Adjunct Tutor

I have been practising as a community pharmacist in Hong Kong for almost 3 years. I enjoyed tutoring students because young people are energetic and often come up with creative yet unexpected ideas—a much needed diversion from our routine pharmacy practice. Personally I have met brilliant tutors during my internship, from whom I learned how to practice as a caring pharmacist.

A pharmacist is a healthcare professional who is responsible for consolidating evidence, making analysis and providing advice to patients and other health care professionals regarding drug issues. I hope my students could build up their confidence and develop their own style of practice, and show patients our unique roles in health care. During my tutoring, I noticed that many students are very knowledgeable, but they lack the method and sense to apply knowledge to practical situation. This is the reason why students should make use of the platform provided by community pharmacy to develop and refine their skills in providing necessary and concise medical information to patients and other health care providers.

Working in the community pharmacy is the experience you need. In community setting, patients don't need a walking Martindale; they need pharmacists who can listen to their medical conditions, digest and recommend suitable interventions. A student with an outstanding GPA can present a clinical care plan and exchange ideas with other health care professionals who speak a common language; however he or she may not be able to extract the necessary information and deliver a suitable message to an elderly patient whose language and cognition level are low. Community pharmacy poses challenges you haven't expected, and it's the chance for students to fill in the missing parts from the curriculum. I believe apprenticeship is the suitable mode for students as it's not just the passing of knowledge, but also the development of professional ethics and values and helping students to learn from their mistakes under supervision.

Teaching a student in my practice allows me to calibrate my communication skills with teenagers. Although they are criticized by the 80's and 90's generation for their dedication, motivation and attitude, most of my students showed enthusiasm and were open to new ideas. My students were able to point out my problems which allowed me to practice in a better way and correct my confirmation error. Besides, they always came up with ideas and views outside my box of thinking. So I encourage my fellow colleagues to accept students for their clerkship although it will add our workload—it is our professional responsibility.