The Chinese University of Hong Kong has a long and colorful history in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) research. Built upon this experience, the University has two major components related to Chinese medicine today — the Institute of Chinese Medicine, which coordinates and promotes collaborative research activities; and the School of Chinese Medicine, which is devoted to education. In this article, we will focus on the activities of the School of Chinese Medicine.

The School of Chinese Medicine was established in 1998 under the Faculty of Science. It is committed to producing new generations of TCM practitioners, who are not only qualified to practice TCM but are also able to liaise with their counterparts, e.g. general practitioners and family doctors of orthodox medicine, to decide on the best treatment for patients. To this end, the School of Chinese Medicine has the full support of the Faculty of Medicine, which participates in designing the curriculum as well as teaching the medical courses for students.

At the same time, the University is fully aware of the needs and expectation of the local Chinese medicine professionals. It therefore offers a Diploma Course for Practicing Herbalists to cater to TCM professionals who are eager to receive further education and training.

As an academic unit responsible for providing educational programs on TCM, the School is committed to promoting public and general education through various approaches, such as offering short courses, hosting conferences, and publishing reading materials.

**BACHELOR OF CHINESE MEDICINE PROGRAM**

The program was launched in September 1999. Its curriculum consists of three years of course work, one year of clinical study, and one year of supervised practice (internship). Through this curriculum, students are expected to learn the basic elements of TCM and receive sufficient training that allows them to start a professional career. Graduates from the program will have a sound biomedical background to communicate with their colleagues in modern medicine, and they are encouraged to move towards a creative interaction between traditional Chinese and orthodox medical systems.

A. Pre-Clinical Courses

The pre-clinical program extends over three academic years. Students are required to complete courses including subjects in basic medical and life sciences, integrated medical subjects, Chinese medical concepts and theories, TCM materials, as well as diagnosis and therapeutic approaches of various specialties in Chinese medicine (internal medicine, gynecology, pediatrics, topical diseases, bone setting, acupuncture, etc.).

B. Clinical Practice

The fourth year of study is devoted to on-site training. Students will spend six months at TCM hospitals practicing in various specialty wards. Considering the lack of a hospital fully devoted to TCM in Hong Kong at the moment, the University has obtained full support from the Guangzhou University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, which provides clinical training programs and hospital facilities for the university students to study at its affiliated hospitals in Guangzhou, China.

In addition to training in hospital settings, students are attached to Chinese medicine outpatient clinics in Hong Kong in order to gain practical experience as general practitioners in treating common diseases. Each student will be supervised under the mentorship of qualified TCM practitioners.
During this period of study, students are also encouraged to attend a short-term attachment at an established TCM clinic and/or hospital outside Hong Kong (e.g., Taiwan, Singapore, Japan, and Korea) in order to gain insights into the organizational system and professional practice of TCM in the neighboring region.

C. Supervised Practice

The fifth and final year of the training program involves an attachment to an approved TCM institution or clinic. Students will attend to patients in general practice as well as in specialized fields, under the supervision of senior practitioners. Under the curriculum, students have to take two professional examinations during this year.

POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMS

Several programs at postgraduate levels in TCM are being planned. They include advanced studies in specialized areas such as acupuncture and bone setting, research programs leading to Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy degrees, as well as a Master of Science degree program for registered TCM practitioners.

DIPLOMA COURSES

The School of Chinese Medicine offers a part-time refresher course for TCM personnel who are currently practicing in Hong Kong. The program comprises two years of study including course work on various subjects, laboratory sessions, and short-term clinical attachments.

SHORT COURSES AND SYMPOSIA

From time to time, the School of Chinese Medicine offers intensive courses on special topics. This year, it organized a short course on introductory TCM for medical professionals including medical doctors, nurses, and physiotherapists. The course is aimed at enhancing the mutual understanding and collaboration among TCM practitioners and mainstream medical professionals. The ultimate goal is to facilitate the cooperative spirit between personnel in the two medical systems in order to provide an additional dimension of medical and healthcare services to the patients.

A number of local and international conferences related to TCM have been organized or co-sponsored by the School of Chinese Medicine as part of its activities to promote TCM education and research.

The details are given below:


PUBLICATION OF BOOKS

To fulfill part of its commitment to promote TCM among the general public and to provide high-quality reading materials for public education, the School of Chinese Medicine has produced a series of topics entitled Chinese Medical Culture Series, including the following six volumes:

- A Revised Edition on Medicinal Diets, by YC Kong, T Chan and SY Hu, in press.

In addition, there are a number of books written or edited by faculty members of the School, including: