An Overview of Primary Care Development in Hong Kong

Primary Care Office
Department of Health

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Primary Care

- First point of contact for individuals and families in a continuing healthcare process
- A good primary care system
  - provides the public with access to better care which is comprehensive, holistic, co-ordinated, and as close as possible to where people live and work
  - provides preventive care as well as quality management of diseases to everyone which is important for promoting health of the population
Primary Care

- Currently, about 70% of clinical consultations are made with primary care practitioners in the private sector.
- The public sector provides primary care through:
  - Hospital Authority - out-patient services
  - Department of Health - preventive public health services, health promotional programmes and other disease prevention and management services

Primary Care Development - Global Perspective

- Declaration of Alma Ata at the International Conference on Primary Health Care in 1978: Primary Care was the key to ‘Health for All’
- World Health Report 2008: “Primary Health Care: Now More Than Ever” – reaffirmed the need to enhance primary care
- 61st session Regional Committee of the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific in Oct 2010: endorsed ‘Regional Strategy on Health Systems Strengthening Based on the Values of Primary Health Care’ and finalised a resolution which urges Member States, among others, to commit to the development of strong and robust health systems based on the values of primary health care
Primary Care Development – Local Perspective


Since 1990, the Government has taken steps to improve primary care in the public system

- Community health promotion and disease prevention services for population sub-groups through the establishment of:
  - Women Health Service in 1994
  - Student Health Service in 1995
  - Elderly Health Service in 1998
Primary Care Development – Local Perspective

- The Centre for Health Protection was established in 2004
- School Dental Care Service and Oral Health Education Unit
- Transfer of GOPCs from DH to HA in 2003
- Healthy City Projects are in place in many districts
- HA has expanded its Community Nursing Service
- HA has been working with many NGOs to enhance care of the elderly and chronic disease patients living in the community
- 14 public Chinese medicine out-patient clinics that involve tripartite collaboration among HA, NGOs and local universities have been set up since 2003

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Primary Care Development – Local Perspective

- Discussion paper “Building a Healthy Tomorrow” in 2005: reviewed service delivery model for the healthcare system and set out the vision and ways to build up a robust primary care system in Hong Kong

- Healthcare Reform Consultation Document “Your Health, Your Life” 2008: put forward a comprehensive package for reforming the health care system with emphasis on enhancing primary care, and received broad public support
Working Group on Primary Care (WGPC)

- Reconvened in October 2008 under the Health and Medical Development Advisory Committee
- Chaired by the Secretary for Food and Health
- Advise on strategic directions for the development of primary care in Hong Kong

Establishment of Task Forces
Recommendations made by the WGPC and its Task Forces

- Develop primary care conceptual models and reference frameworks, especially for the prevention and management of common chronic diseases.

- Set up a Primary Care Directory to promote enhanced primary care through the family doctor concept and adopting a multi-disciplinary approach.

- Devise feasible service models to deliver community-based primary care services through appropriate pilot projects, including the establishment of community health centres (CHCs) and networks.

Establishment of the Primary Care Office

- Support and co-ordinate the development of primary care in Hong Kong.

- Implement the primary care development strategies and actions.

- Co-ordinate actions among the Department of Health, the Hospital Authority, the private healthcare sector, NGOs and other healthcare providers.
Primary Care Office

- Set up under the Department of Health
- Comprising professional and administrative staff from the Food and Health Bureau, Department of Health, and Hospital Authority
- As of January 2011, 20 staff from various disciplines:
  - Doctors (Family Medicine and Public Health)
  - Nurses
  - Scientific officers
  - Administrative and executive officers
Policy Agenda 2010-11 - Primary Care Initiatives

Primary Care Development Strategy Document

Primary Care Directory

Conceptual Models on Primary Care and Reference Frameworks

Primary Care Campaign

Community Health Centres

Government Primary Care Initiatives:
- Childhood Influenza Vaccination Subsidy Scheme
- Elderly Vaccination Subsidy Scheme
- Elderly Health Care Voucher Pilot Scheme
- HA Pilot Projects

Primary Care Reform Strategy Document in Hong Kong

- First discussed in the LegCo Health Panel on 12 July 2010

- Web-based version published in Dec 2010

- Set out benefits of good primary care, the major strategies and pathways of action which help to deliver high quality primary care in Hong Kong
Vision of the Future Primary Care System

1. Every citizen has access to a primary care doctor as their long-term health partner;
2. Better availability of comprehensive, continuing and co-ordinated care;
3. Emphasis on preventing diseases and their deterioration by care provided by multi-disciplinary teams;
4. Every person is supported in their efforts to improve and take care of their own health; and
5. Care provided is of high quality and evidence-based, and is provided by well trained professionals working for patients in the context of family and community.

Key Strategies to Strengthen Primary Care in Hong Kong

1. Develop comprehensive care by multi-disciplinary teams
2. Improve continuity of care of individuals
3. Improve co-ordination of care among healthcare professionals across different sectors
4. Strengthen preventive approach to tackle major disease burden
Key Strategies to Strengthen Primary Care in Hong Kong

5. Enhance inter-sectoral collaboration to improve the availability of quality care, especially care for chronic disease patients

6. Emphasise person-centred care and patient empowerment

7. Support professional development and quality improvement

8. Strengthen organisational and infrastructural support for the changes

Conceptual Models on Primary Care and Reference Frameworks

- Developed by the Task Force on Conceptual Model and Prevention Protocols

- Web-based version of the reference frameworks for diabetes and hypertension available in Jan 2011

- Provide common reference to healthcare professionals for the provision of continuing, comprehensive and evidence-based care in the community, empower patients and their carers, and raise public awareness of the importance of preventing and properly managing chronic diseases

- Will develop conceptual models and reference frameworks for other major diseases or age-specific groups (e.g. children and elderly)
Primary Care Directory

- Web-based system containing background and practice-based information about the primary care providers
- Facilitate the public to choose primary care providers who are suitable for them
- Develop sub-directories for doctors and dentists first
- Registered doctors/dentists who commit themselves to the provision of directly accessible, comprehensive, continuing, and co-ordinated person-centred primary care services are invited to enrol in the Directory
- Enrollment has begun in end December 2010
- Plan to launch to the public in March 2011
- Sub-directories for Chinese medicine practitioners, nurses, other allied health professionals will be developed

Primary Care Service Delivery Models

- Exploring various Community Health Centre (CHC)-type models with healthcare professionals and providers from the public sector, private sector, non-governmental organisations and universities

- Continue to plan various CHC pilot projects that aim to foster the provision of more comprehensive one-stop primary care services

- A purpose-built CHC in Tin Shui Wai will be established in the first half of 2012
Primary Care Campaign

- Launch in March 2010
- Target:
  - Healthcare professionals – aims to engage them and solicit their support in the promotion of primary care
  - General public – aims to
    - raise public awareness of the benefits of having a family doctor as the first point of contact in the healthcare system in order to have continuing, co-ordinated and person-centred care;
    - reinforce actions of the public to always consult their family doctors as the first point of contact for healthcare services; and
    - encourage the public to improve their own health and that of their family members through establishing partnership with their family doctors and adopting a preventive approach in improving health

Activities:
- Roll out the Primary Care Directory to the public in March 2011
- Arrange publicity activities through mass media channels, including TV and radio Announcements of Public Interest, media interviews, feature articles, advertisements via mass transport media, advertisements on the Internet, etc.
- Organise health promotional activities for the public in partnership with healthcare professionals
- Organise briefing sessions to solicit support and collaboration of important stakeholders, including District Councils and other organisations
Continuous Development and Implementation

- A step-by-step and consensus building approach to reform the primary care system
- A virtuous cycle of pilot, evaluation and adjustment for the continuous development and implementation of specific initiatives and pilot projects
- Collaborations from the government, public and private health sector, NGOs, other primary care providers and related social service agencies, patients groups and other stakeholders to enhance primary care development

THANK YOU