



I am delighted to welcome our distinguished speakers and all participants to the Health Research Symposium 2014.

The Government is committed to addressing rising community demands for healthcare services and building a healthy society. Health and medical research plays an important role to inform our health policies with the latest knowledge and most advanced development in the field.

In 2011, we embarked on a major initiative to strengthen our support for health-related research activities in Hong Kong by consolidating the former *Health and Health Services Research Fund* and the *Research Fund for the Control of Infectious Diseases* into the Health and Medical Research Fund, with an injection of HK\$1 billion in additional funding and an expanded funding scope to cover topics in advanced medical research.

In the past two years, the Health and Medical Research Fund has attracted a large number of research proposals from local universities and medical experts on a wide range of topics, including communicable diseases such as influenza, viral hepatitis and HIV; non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and stroke; diseases of ageing such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease; mental health; Chinese medicine; and advanced medical research such as stem cell and regenerative medicine. The Fund has also made substantial investments in our research infrastructure, such as the commissioning of Phase 1 Clinical Trials Centres at the two local medical schools, as well as commissioned research studies to facilitate informed policy decisions on matters like control of infectious diseases, healthcare for the ageing, cancer screening programmes, and manpower supply and professional development for our medical and healthcare professions. The number of research projects funded under the Health and Medical Research Fund has grown significantly from 106 in 2011-12 by more than two-fold to 248 in 2014-15. The total funding commitments have also increased from HK\$90 million to HK\$211 million over the same period.

The Symposium this year will again showcase the rich, state-of-the-art knowledge generated from the funded research projects and to share the achievements made by the very successful research teams. With Government's unfailing support under the Health and Medical Research Fund and on other fronts, I very much hope our research community will continue to excel and contribute to the well-being of the society.

I wish all participants an insightful experience at this Symposium that will enlighten you in the pursuit of research excellence in the years ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Yuen'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mr Richard YUEN Ming-fai, JP
Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Health)
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region