

HKU School of Public Health hosts the Fourth Hong Kong Public Health Forum on *The Role of the Generalist - A Tribute to Professor Anthony J Hedley*

The School of Public Health, Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine of The University of Hong Kong (HKU) hosts the fourth Hong Kong Public Health Forum today. The theme of the Forum is on the "*The Role of the Generalist in Public Health - A Tribute to Professor Anthony J Hedley*", Emeritus Professor and Head of our erstwhile Department of Community Medicine between 1988-2000. The Forum featured some of the most important pillars of Professor Hedley's research: Air Pollution, Tobacco Control and Health Services Research. And Professor Gabriel M Leung, Dean of Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine gave a lecture entitled "*The Last Great Public Health Polymath*" to conclude the forum.

More than 350 guests including HKU Council Chairman Dr The Honorable Leong Che-hung, Emeritus Professor Rosie Young, Professor Sophia Chan, Under Secretary for Food and Health, Dr Fung Hong, President of Hong Kong College of Community Medicine, Dr PY Lam, former Director of Health and many other public health practitioners, scholars and advocates graced the occasion. Many colleagues, associates, trainees, students and friends of Professor Hedley from all over the world have gathered at the Forum in celebration of his significant achievements and contributions to public health, rekindling fond memories of Professor Hedley at the University and in the city of Hong Kong.

Professor Malik Peiris, Tam Wah-Ching Professor in Medical Science, Chair Professor and Director of School of Public Health gave the opening address. "When one thinks of Tony Hedley, it conjures up images of *David versus Goliath*. He combines research excellence and integrity on the one hand, with determined advocacy on the other. He symbolises the possibility that one person can take on, what appears to be, insurmountable odds", said Professor Peiris. A [video slideshow](#) capturing memorable snapshots of Professor Hedley's time with the Department of Community Medicine and its successor, the School of Public Health, was played after Professor Peiris' speech, in reminiscences of Professor Hedley, a Public Health Giant.

The highlight of the Forum was *The Anthony Hedley Lecture on "The Last Great Public Health Polymath?"* by Professor Gabriel M Leung, Dean of Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine. "Tony is a generalist with a strategic command of the full ecoscope of all that matters to population health, but one who can at once become a competent, even expert, specialist in a specific area when called upon", said the Dean. The Dean also remarked that Professor Hedley has taught and inspired generations of "jobbing public health doctors" to take flight and thanks Professor Hedley for being a guardian angel, a guiding light and a gracious role model to him personally. The culminating point in the event was a presentation of a gift to Professor Hedley by Dean Leung on behalf of the Organizing Committee. The gift is a backdrop cloth bearing the blessings and appreciative messages from guests from all over the world in memento of Professor Hedley's visit to the University again.

Internationally-renowned scholars including Professor Ross Anderson (King's College London), Professor David Simpson (London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine), and Professor Ray Jones (University of Plymouth) gave keynote speeches on the respective topics of *"The burden of disease due to air pollution: current knowledge and important gaps"*, *"Tobacco Wars in Hong Kong: the evidence-based role of academia"*, and *"How should we assess the value or impact of health service research"*. The keynote speeches were followed by plenary discussions by panelists comprising Professor Peter Brimblecombe (City University of Hong Kong), Mr Mok Wai-cheun (Environmental Protection Department), Dr Wong Chit-ming (The University of Hong Kong), Professor Sophia Chan (HK SAR Government), Professor Judith Mackay (Asian Consultancy on Tobacco Control), Professor Lam Tai-hing (The University of Hong Kong), Dr Lo Su-vui (Hospital Authority), Professor Sarah McGhee (The University of Hong Kong), and Dr Fung Hong (Hong Kong College of Community Medicine), all of whom are key policy-makers and influential stakeholders in the disciplines concerned. Two other overseas discussants, Professor Alistair Woodward (The University of Auckland) and Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter (University of Cambridge), participated in the plenary discussion by tele-conferencing. Their insights, together with that of the other thirteen panelists, have helped contribute to very enlightening discussions on these important public health issues.

About Professor Anthony J Hedley, School of Public Health, Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, HKU

Emeritus Professor Anthony J Hedley has been Head of the Department of Community Medicine, predecessor of the School of Public Health, between 1988-2000, and as Chair Professor of Community Medicine at the University until his retirement in 2010. In recognition of his outstanding contributions to public health, Professor Hedley received a World Health Organization Medal and the HKSAR Bronze Bauhinia Star in 1999 and 2000 respectively.

About the School of Public Health, Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, HKU

The HKU School of Public Health has a long and distinguished history in public health education and high impact research. With world leading research in infectious diseases as well as on non-communicable diseases of both local and global importance, the School has made significant contributions through its research and advocacy to improve the health of populations and individuals, both locally and globally. The School is a leading research and teaching hub in public health on influenza and other emerging viruses, control of infectious and non-communicable diseases, tobacco control, air pollution, psycho-oncology, behavioral sciences, life-course epidemiology, and health economics, health services planning and management. This work has informed international (e.g. the World Health Organization, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations), national and local public health policies.

Media enquiries

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