

# Foreword



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Cancer is the top killer in Hong Kong. On average, cancer took the lives of over 35 individuals from their loved ones every day in the past five years. With a growing and ageing population, the number of new cancer cases and related healthcare burden is set to rise. Nevertheless, from 1981 to 2018, the overall age-standardised mortality rates for all cancers have gradually decreased after an initial steady state. Medical advances have made possible earlier diagnosis and more effective treatments. Lifestyle changes are also instrumental to the prevention of certain cancer types.

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is clearly committed to stepping up the prevention and control of cancer and the support for cancer patients and their carers. It is our goal to reduce the hit rate of cancer, to provide the most effective and timely cancer screening and treatment to all in need, to offer the most reassuring support services to survivors and their carers, and to build up our capacity – through surveillance, investment in technology, building alliances with patient groups, research, etc., in the collective fight against this disease.

The Hong Kong Cancer Strategy is the first attempt to offer a holistic plan for cancer prevention and control for Hong Kong. The strategy seeks to provide more appropriate and timely intervention to people with and without symptoms of cancer at a population level, reducing the agony and anxieties amongst the affected and ultimately enhancing their quality of life.

Through the Hong Kong Cancer Strategy, we identify service gaps and set strategic priorities and direction for possible stages throughout a patient's complex journey, from prevention and screening, early detection and diagnosis, treatment, survivorship, to palliative care. We take on a greater role in making available resources to support people living with cancer. We review how cancer-related policies should be more effectively supported through collection of data, technology,



as well as research. Evidence-based cancer control actions will be implemented in a focused, coordinated, proactive and accountable manner, in collaboration with healthcare partners, cancer survivors and the wider community.

Cancer represents one of the most important types of non-communicable diseases (“NCD”). As such, the Hong Kong Cancer Strategy complements the Government’s Strategy and Action Plan to prevent and control NCD, promulgated through the document *“Towards 2025: Strategy and Action Plan to Prevent and Control Non-communicable Diseases in Hong Kong”*.

I take the opportunity to express my gratitude to all experts and professionals who have generously contributed your time and efforts in drawing up this document. Indeed, cancer prevention and care require multi-disciplinary efforts in order to meet the needs of the target groups, cancer patients and their families and carers.

The launch of this Hong Kong Cancer Strategy is an important milestone in our united fight against cancer. It is neither the end nor the beginning. Through the collective efforts of the Government and the Hospital Authority, alongside the valuable contribution of the private healthcare sector and civil society, we want to instill hope in the community that cancer is preventable and curable. We will strive to optimise treatment and post-treatment services within bounds.

While forging ahead with the Hong Kong Cancer Strategy, we will be tackling in parallel other pressing issues such as manpower planning and training needs of the healthcare sector. Safeguarding the health for the community is a tall order indeed. With the professionalism, dedication and wisdom of all our stakeholders, however, I have confidence that we will be making a difference.