

Honorary Doctor of Social Science

Dr Edward LEONG Che-hung

Public Orator Professor Matthew LEE Kwok-on

Mr Council Chairman:

Dr Edward Leong Che-hung is well-known both in his profession of medicine and in the sector of public service. In his illustrious career of more than fifty years, his accomplishments are remarkable in pioneering new surgical procedures, educating generations of doctors, initiating discussions and promoting awareness of diverse medical and social issues, and in different ways, bettering the life of many individuals. Now in his eighties, Dr Leong remains as energetic and steadfast as ever in his efforts to make the world a better place.

Dr Leong comes from a family with extensive involvement in various areas of medicine. His father, also a medical doctor, served the Aberdeen community with dedication for decades in the last century. In those days of austerity, Dr Leong saw his parents carrying medical provisions in their rattan baskets every day as they went around treating their patients and foregoing their own comfort in the service of their calling. Such unflagging loyalty to the well-being of those under their care inspired Dr Leong to take up a career in medicine.

After he obtained his medical degree from the University of Hong Kong, Dr Leong taught in the Department of Surgery of his alma mater from 1963 to 1978, at the same time carrying on a robust research agenda. His work on gastrocystoplasty, a global first, was considered a breakthrough in both technology and scientific research. His advancement in the use of material from the stomach for use in cystoplasty in humans made him world famous and earned him the position of Hunterian Professor at the Royal College of Surgeons of England in 1975. He pioneered organ transplantation and participated in the first kidney transplant in Hong Kong in 1969. He is also Regent at the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. He was Founding President of the College of Surgeons of Hong Kong and served as President of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine from 2000 to 2004. At present, he is Chairman of the

Hong Kong AIDS Foundation and President of the Hong Kong Anti-Cancer Society. He also runs a private practice as a surgeon.

The many key posts that Dr Leong has held throughout his career indicate the depth and breadth of his expertise. His posts include serving as Chairman of the Hospital Authority, the Council on Human Reproductive Technology, the Elderly Commission, the Council of the University of Hong Kong, the ICAC Complaints Committee, the Elder Academy Development Foundation, and the Standard Working Hours Committee. Dr Leong was an elected member of the Legislative Council from 1988 to 2000 as well as a Non-official Member of the Executive Council of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region from 2005 to 2012. He was awarded the Grand Bauhinia Medal in 2010 in recognition of his distinguished public and community service and his dedication to the development of the medical profession in Hong Kong.

With characteristic good citizenship, Dr Leong rarely turns down approaches from the public for his service even though he takes particular delight and pride in his work in the healthcare sector, especially in areas where medicine, law and social mores intersect. His efforts are extraordinary in the promotion of organ transplant, the legislation regarding the application of reproductive technology, the regulation and licensing of the practice of traditional Chinese medicine, the protection of industrial health, and the education of the public about AIDS. In most of these endeavours, Dr Leong is called upon not only to bring to bear his professional knowledge but also to exercise rationality, a very human quality that enables one to come to informed and principled decisions and to stand by them when all sides of an issue have been duly considered.

Of late, Dr Leong has turned his attention to the welfare of the ageing population in Hong Kong. Beyond providing them with the basic care—a warm bed and a hot meal—Dr Leong sees to it that the social and intellectual needs of the elderly are met as well. The idea of active ageing thus came to Dr Leong. Among other ways of leading the elderly out from social isolation, sometimes self-imposed, Dr Leong pushed hard for the Elder Academy and established the Elder Academy Development Foundation. Under his leadership, the Elderly Commission lent great support to City University of Hong Kong to establish the Elder Academy Programme, which allows senior citizens to join classes with undergraduates in such a way that the two generations can interact and learn from each other.

Mr Council Chairman, Dr Edward Leong Che-hung has lived up to the expectations of the medical profession and become a great doctor, one who, according to an old Chinese saying, not only cures diseases but prevents them before they emerge. His involvement in the public domain is therefore best understood in this spirit: to root out problems before they become problems. In recognition of his accomplishments as a medical professional and a tireless public servant, it is my pleasure to present to you Dr Leong for the conferment of a Doctor of Social Science, *honoris causa*.