



THE MEDICAL LICENTiate
SOCIETY OF HONG KONG

香港執照醫生醫學會

Medical Licentiate Society of Hong Kong urges for keeping Licensing Examination

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HONG KONG – Overseas doctors in Hong Kong are surprised and worried about planned changes in regulation that they feel will damage Hong Kong’s excellent medical system.

News sources today say that the Government will propose an amendment to the Medical Registration Ordinance on Friday to allow overseas doctors to practice in Hong Kong without having to pass the Licensing Examination.

The Medical Licentiate Society of Hong Kong always strongly argues in favour of maintaining Hong Kong’s standards, and this should include a requirement for passing the exam. Three weeks ago, the Society called on the Medical Council of Hong Kong to urgently reinstate the exam, which had been cancelled by the Medical Council five times due to the COVID-19.

“We sincerely hope the HKSAR government will start by fixing the actual problems within the public sector first. Importing doctors amounts to putting a band aid on the problem. In fact, the optimal way to attract and retain overseas trained doctors is to start listening to them first. They should reflect deeply on our community’s unique viewpoint”, said Dr. Marcus Marcet, president of the society.

According to a survey held by the group in 2019, 84 percent of non-locally trained doctors agree or strongly agree the Licensing Examination should keep an examination requirement for attaining Full Registration for all non-local graduates. The community’s opinions have not changed. The Society’s stance and its survey results highlight the need for keeping the exam and draw into question the recently disclosed proposal for potentially amending the Medical Registration Ordinance.

“While our community of doctors is from all around the world, there is tremendous shared interest in keeping up Hong Kong’s medical standards by way of the exam, said Dr. Marcus Marcet, president of the society. “It’s also reassuring to see the exam candidates themselves believe in the exam they so diligently prepare for,” added Marcet.



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The survey, which examined the views of 302 non-locally trained doctors, showed that 84 percent felt the exam helps safeguard patients' safety by ensuring all non-local graduates meet Hong Kong's professional standards. Maintaining the public's trust and colonial exemptions no longer applicable were also among the common reasons given for supporting the exam.

Nearly half of the respondents were graduates of UK medical schools and over a quarter were from Mainland schools, the next most common group. Eighty-eight percent had passed the exam and the remaining 12 percent were candidates preparing for the exam. Opinions were consistently in favor of the exam, irrespective of licensing jurisdiction or professional status.

The Licentiate Society strongly believes a vigorous and fair licensing exam is the best way to qualify for working in Hong Kong. An open and well conducted exam is paramount to the long-term quality of the medical profession, and it is the standard in most developed countries in the world.

In addition, the shortage issue is not one of doctors, but rather their support, including less non-clinical work, more allied health help, and greater efficiency and technology within the public sector. This issue will not be solved by more doctors. Resolution requires accurately addressing the issues at hand and doing so through the entire league of healthcare workers.

Press Enquiries

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About the Medical Licentiate Society of Hong Kong

The Medical Licentiate Society of Hong Kong (香港執照醫生醫學會) is an independent, non-profit professional body representing licensed non-local medical graduate doctors in Hong Kong. The Society was founded to support said doctors and to engage with the public and other medical professionals both in and out of Hong Kong. Please visit the Society website (lmchk.org) to learn more about the organization's ongoing efforts in representing the community of non-locally trained doctors licensed in Hong Kong.