Adoption of the Draft Amended Memorandum and Articles of Association of Hong Kong Dental Association Ltd (HKDA M&A)

It is my great honour to inform you that the special resolution for adoption of the draft amended HKDA M&A was passed at the Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) held on 21 May 2019. Our original M&A was written 25 years ago during the incorporation of HKDA as a limited company.

After the passage of the Articles of Association of HKDA Ltd (Articles), major changes included the adoption of the Postal Ballot for general meetings, limitation of the presidential tenure, increase in number of Council members, decrease in quorum for general meetings and other new measures are to be carried out at the coming Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 17 September 2019 as the first attempt. In accomplishing this task, the most difficult part of work was to rewrite the old Articles in accordance with the new model articles of the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 622). Nevertheless, we really feel great that the articles are now presented in simple English presentation, with certain detailed arrangement and definitions clearly specified for clarity and follow suit. On behalf of the HKDA Council, we must express our heartfelt gratitude towards members’ support by joining hands to make this historical achievement possible! Afterall, we have gone through more than 18 months to complete the whole process.

Besides official meetings of our Task Force on Review of M&A of HKDA headed by Dr Century Tsang, there were numerous internal communications within our Task Force, the HKDA Council, as well as lobbying and explanation work towards our members. Externally, we liaised with other local and overseas professional bodies and associations, asking for their sharing of experience of M&A amendment as reference. Along with the latest development needs of the Association, the new Articles have laid an excellent foundation for our furtheurance of governance work.

With the adoption of Postal Ballot arrangement, even greater convenience has been provided with our members. For those who are not able to attend our general meetings can opt to express their wish and voting decision by this direct mean of voting. In a way, we hope members’ participation in our general meeting can be raised further after our adoption of specific proxy voting system last year as a transition to the postal ballot voting system. May I draw members’ attention that under the new arrangement as provided under the new Articles, three voting means are made available. Any voting member entitled to attend and vote at the AGM shall be entitled to vote in person, or by postal ballot, or by proxy at the general meeting. Please take note to the details in our first batch of AGM documents to be released by post on 19 July 2019.

Honorary Life and Life Membership

During the process of seeking legal advice for the amendment of the Articles, we were also advised on the definitions of Honorary Life Members and Life Members of the Association.

We were advised that in the wake of the passage of the new Articles, the interpretation of Honorary Life Membership under article 32 should be as follows:
By articles 32 and 32A, Honorary Life/ Life Membership may only be conferred upon any Ordinary Member -

Article 32C stipulates that Ordinary Membership may be conferred by the Council on any person who, whether he is actually practising dentistry or not -
(a) is of good characters; and
(b) is a registered dentist.

Under the provisions that Honorary Life/ Life membership may only be conferred on Ordinary Members fulfilling the requirements stated in article 32(1)(a), (b) and (c); and, under article 32C(1)(b), an Ordinary Member must be a registered dentist, we were therefore advised that, an Honorary Life/ Life Members shall, by definition, also be a registered dentist.

We have been aware that some Life Members no longer maintain his/ her status as a registered dentist on the List of Registered Dentists of the Dental Council of Hong Kong.

With the implementation of PHFO (Private Healthcare Facilities Ordinance) and the possible launch of mandatory CME in the future, we anticipated more colleagues may not consider to have their name maintaining in the register after retiring from practice.

In order to encourage these respectable senior colleagues to remain as HKDA members and stay with us, the Council has passed a resolution in the previous Council meeting to move a special resolution for inclusion of a new membership category to specially facilitate the real need of our respectable retired members who were conferred upon Honorary Life Membership and Life Membership.

Last but not least, I would like to thank for the effort and contribution of the entire HKDA Council, particularly the whole Task Force on Review of M&A of HKDA chaired by Dr Century Tsang; Past Presidents for their wisdom; and Ms Gladys Chan as the Executive Director of the Association. Once again, I would like to thank you for members’ trust and support for this incredible task!

**Elderly Health Care Voucher Scheme (HCVS)**

In a hope of providing elders with greater incentive to receive dental care treatment that they need, we made every endeavour to propose enhancement measures under HCVS to the Government, such as an increase in accumulation limit of the vouchers and extra release of the one-off additional voucher. On 26 June 2019, an additional $1,000 worth of vouchers was provided, on a one-off basis, to each eligible elder and the accumulation limit of the vouchers was also increased to $8,000 as a regular measure.

We are glad to see our suggestions were again adopted and implemented, followed by the fourth phase of expansion of the “Community Care Fund (CCF) Elderly Dental Assistance Programme” in February 2019 to cover people who are Old Age Living Allowance recipients aged 65 or above. The maximum amount of dental subsidy under the Programme has been adjusted from $15,350 to $18,170, including a significant increase in subsidy level of removable dentures from $10,050 to $11,910, with effect from 1 June 2019. This encouraging increment of subsidy amount, together with the enhancement measures introduced in the fourth phase of expansion, will further facilitate and promote our dental profession’s participation in the Programme.

I sincerely hope many more members will register as HCVS participating service providers and also CCF Dentists, joining hands to provide quality dental care service for the elderly in our community. On the other hand, we will continue to pursue the Government to invest in Public-Private Partnership Programmes to enhance the provision of primary care service for the needy.