

## Research Assessment Exercise 2020

### Impact Overview Statement

**University:** The University of Hong Kong (HKU)

**Unit of Assessment (UoA):** 05 - Nursing, optometry, rehabilitation sciences and other health care professions

**Total number of eligible staff of the university in the UoA:** 22

#### (1) Context

This UoA research is undertaken within the School of Nursing, School of Public Health, and Department of Pharmacology and Pharmacy. Fundamental to our research is pursuing impact on healthcare policies for improving patient care and outcomes, health care delivery, health and well-being of the Hong Kong and global population. The main beneficiaries of our research are:

- **Patients** through research to improve health outcomes, reduce morbidity and mortality, e.g., smoking cessation programmes that reduce mortality from tobacco-attributed diseases;
- **Members of the public** through health promotion, disease prevention and screening, e.g., screening for adolescent scoliosis to avoid invasive surgery;
- **Vulnerable members** of society through offering evidence-based targeted programmes, e.g., advocacy intervention that improves quality of life of abused women;
- **Public hospitals and NGOs** through collaborations with the Hospital Authority and major health- and social service-related NGOs. Our research (e.g. cancer supportive care services, use of information and communication technology in family services) have influenced policies and services.
- **National and international health policy makers** by providing evidence to inform policies, including those of World Health Organisation (WHO), US National Academy of Medicine, US Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), and UK National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, e.g., WHO guidelines of recommendations for intervention research on violence against women.
- **Government** by providing evidence to inform policies and chairmanship/membership of panels, e.g., Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health (COSH), and Food and Health Bureau (FHB).

#### (2) Approach to impact

Our approach is underpinned by a strong pledge to knowledge exchange (KE), with academics *working directly with the beneficiaries of research*, from study inception to policy implementation.

**Unit support** – School KE Unit [led by **P Chau**] supports networking with beneficiaries; while Faculty KE Unit has 19 dedicated staff support. Staff are encouraged, as part of their performance review, to undertake impact-driven research to improve patient health and clinical practice, contribute to the development of new therapeutic approaches, inform policymakers and raise public awareness of our research. Competitive KE funding (UoA obtained 21 in the review period) is available for staff to undertake projects which impact on non-academic sectors (e.g. promoting mindfulness yoga for patients with Parkinson’s disease). Faculty-level communications in Faculty newsletters, by showcasing research in public lecture series (e.g., noise impact on health, and zero-time exercise), as well as through awards (e.g., diabetes risk score mobile application) promotes success and encourages other staff to pursue impact generating activities. HKU initiatives include the HKU Scholars Hub that centralises staff KE profile, HKU 3MT competition for research students to present research to the general audience, and the KE Excellence Award.

**Influencing international professional bodies** – A major role was WHO Consultant and Advisor; through which, our research innovations influenced international guidelines on violence against women [**J Wong**], and monitoring and prevention policies on tobacco use [**TH Lam**]. Our research and participation an international taskforce influenced the change of USPSTF recommendation on scoliosis screening [**D Fong**]. We also ran online lectures for the European School of Oncology for delivering our breast cancer interventional strategies to international providers [**W Lam**].

**Influence national agencies** – We have >20 years collaboration with Department of Health, e.g., we contributed to the development of the WHO Collaborating Centre on smoking cessation, training of smoking cessation strategies to >240 professionals, and implementation of banning indoor smoking policy. We also worked with COSH to deliver smoking cessation services to >10K smokers

[**TH Lam, W Li**]. Examples of other major roles are the Chairs of Nursing Council [**A Tiwari**] and HK Pharmacy and Poison Board [**I Wong**] (statutory authority for the pharmacy profession); AIDS Trust Fund [**D Ho**]; and Centre for Disease Control and Prevention in Mainland China [**TH Lam**]. Also, [**S Chan**] was appointed Under-Secretary and now the Secretary of FHB.

**Influence clinical partners and NGOs** – We maintain active links and collaborated fully with healthcare providers by (i) maximising the proximity, co-location and even organisational integration of our researchers with practicing clinicians, e.g. establishing the first cancer centre in a public hospital [**W Lam**]; (ii) hosting regular international conferences, e.g. HK International Nursing Forum, to deliver the latest research to healthcare providers; (iii) developing collaboration with hospitals in HK and Mainland and NGOs, e.g., we contributed to the development and delivery of smoking cessation services in >25 clinics, and (iv) engaging in advisory committees, e.g., Advisory Board member of Single Parents Association [**J Wong**]. Three staff [**CC Lin; TH Lam; I Wong**] received endowed professorship in recognition of their positive impact on public and patient health.

**Influence the public** – We achieve this by regular public lectures, press, and social media, e.g., e-cigarette ban [**K Wang**], and tai chi for lung cancer patients [**CC Lin**]. Our underpinning research had engaged patients or the public since its inception to inform the development of interventional strategies. We contributed substantially to campaigns for awareness of health benefits of research. Examples are healthy aging campaign to >900 elderly public housing tenants by robots practicing tai-chi [**P Chau**], and develop territory infrastructure to promote breastfeeding to the public [**K Lok**].

### (3) **Strategy and plans**

The University's Vision 2016-2025 is to embed impact into all of our research. We will strengthen the focus on and reward research innovations that benefit communities and transform global technologies. This shift will acknowledge material outcomes and leadership in our impact endeavours and add transformational value to the global society. We will actively track, evidence gather and foster the tangible benefits we bring to the global as well as local, mainland China and broader Asian communities. The aim is to promote research that generates impact and to develop a tailored platform for impact, which is reflected in the strategic and operational plans across the UoA.

**Developing new and existing research impact through closer working with beneficiaries** – Researchers will be encouraged, through the coordination of their corresponding research group leaders, to develop and interact with patients and public, professional, commissioning, policy making, and third sector groups to discuss the clinical and policy implications of their research from inception to publication, and to optimise knowledge transfer and impact on these beneficiaries.

**Increasing the reach of existing impact and identifying new beneficiaries** – With the development of the Greater Bay Area, we will strengthen collaborations and extend the beneficiaries to Mainland China, pioneered by the HKU-Shenzhen Hospital. We are also the only nursing institution in Hong Kong to be a signatory of the Southeast and East Asian Nursing Education and Research Network, through which we will expand the health and wellbeing and economic impact.

**Enhancing impactful research** – The School KE Chair will work closely with the Research Chair to develop a coordinated overview of activities and ensure ongoing focus on impact, by facilitating the gathering of metrics for impact success. We will also expand our use of social media within schools to enhance our interaction with non-academic stakeholders and public interest, and encourage staff to improve relationships with beneficiaries.

### (4) **Relationship to case studies**

The following two impact case studies showcase the success of our engagement approach:

**Smoking cessation and tobacco control case study** illustrates how our engagement with government, health agencies/professionals and the community has contributed enormously to banning indoor smoking, enlarging health warnings on packets, raising tobacco tax, developing smoking cessation services, and banning of electronic cigarettes and other new products.

**Domestic violence prevention case study** illustrates our partnership NGOs to deliver empowerment programmes for women suffering from intimate partner abuse. It shows the impact on international guidelines and recommendations via active contributions to international agencies such as WHO and the US Institute of Medicine.