

DOCTOR OF SOCIAL SCIENCES,
honoris causa

Professor Sophia Chan Siu-chee, GBS, JP



Mr Pro-Chancellor,

Professor Sophia Chan Siu-chee has had an illustrious and impressive career that spans three sectors: healthcare, academia and politics. She excelled as a dedicated paediatric nurse, providing exceptional care to sick infants and children in intensive care, as a respected professor, instilling knowledge and nurturing individuals who contribute to the holistic healing process in clinical settings, and as a productive researcher, investigating scientific frontiers in areas related to public health and nursing. In 2012, she transitioned to the top echelon of the Hong Kong SAR Government, serving as Under Secretary and then as Secretary, responsible for setting policies related to food, health and the environment for the population of over 7 million, as well as overseeing the strategic direction of the various Government departments under the Food & Health Bureau and the Hospital Authority. Following her tenure in government, in 2022, she went back to the university campus, a place she dearly missed in the previous 10 years, to continue her teaching and research pursuits.

When she was young, Professor Chan never thought of taking up a senior position. Her path in life took a meaningful turn when she heeded the advice of her mother, who was a doctor, that nursing education would benefit her for her whole life. A spirited secondary student with a compassionate nature, she therefore enrolled in nursing school and became a registered nurse. With a desire to excel and to elevate the standard of nursing care, she ventured to London to undergo specialised training in paediatric nursing. Later, to further augment her expertise in the field, she obtained a Master of Education from the University of Manchester, a Master of Public Health from the Harvard School of Public Health, and a Doctor of Philosophy from The University of Hong Kong (HKU).

Professor Chan's transition from the clinical ward to the teaching theatre and research laboratory appeared to be a logical progression. When she received an invitation to join the government,

however, it was definitely a tough decision for her, especially considering her burgeoning reputation in academia. At the time, she held the esteemed position of Assistant Dean of the Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine of HKU and was the top-funded researcher in the School of Nursing, leading a number of research projects. After countless sleepless nights, engaging in introspective conversations and listening to her heart, she concluded that accepting a ministerial position would present an exceptional opportunity to utilise her expertise and contribute to the overall well-being of Hong Kong. She also saw it as a chance to turn her visionary ideas into reality, particularly in the promotion of primary healthcare in the community and to turn Hong Kong into a smoke-free society. With great bravery, she embraced the challenge.

During her tenure, Professor Chan left an indelible mark through her remarkable contributions to the formulation and successful implementation of numerous pivotal policies on health, food and environmental hygiene, as well as on agriculture and fisheries. Demonstrating unwavering dedication to safeguarding and advancing public health, she spearheaded the establishment of District Health Care Centres to provide primary healthcare service across all 18 districts, set up the first Children Hospital, steered the development of the first Chinese Medicine Hospital, launched the Hong Kong Cancer Strategy, banned E-cigarettes and Heated Tobacco Products in Hong Kong, banned trans fat, and addressed the severe shortage of doctors through legislative amendments to facilitate qualified non-locally trained Hong Kong doctors to practice in our public healthcare sector, to name just a few.

When reflecting on the most significant challenge in her career, Professor Chan candidly cites the Covid-19 pandemic without hesitation. During the pandemic, which deeply plagued Hong Kong society and the economy for three years, she was tasked with making numerous arduous decisions pertaining to the prevention and control of COVID-19, such as preventing importation and spread of the virus through travel restrictions, vaccination strategies, social-distancing measures, a mandatory track-and-trace app, and quarantine arrangements. Undoubtedly, while these public health decisions were effective, they still attracted criticism from politicians and engendered complaints from the community, as people's daily life was disrupted. However, Professor Chan admirably tackled these challenges, recognizing the importance of embracing diverse perspectives and fostering unity during the battle against the pandemic. As normalcy has gradually returned to Hong Kong, Professor Chan expressed her heartfelt gratitude to the community for their remarkable resilience and unwavering sense of unity, and acknowledged the commendable commitment of the countless unsung heroes working behind the scenes.

With promoting primary health care as one of her missions, Professor Chan was delighted to witness the fruition of her efforts in the release in December last year of the ground-breaking Primary Healthcare Blueprint she masterminded with her colleagues during her tenure. A visionary leader, she advocated the establishment of a prevention-oriented, community-based, family-centric primary healthcare system, which will serve to improve the overall health status of the population and alleviate pressure on the public hospital system by reducing avoidable demand for secondary and tertiary healthcare. This is a crucial step towards ensuring a sustainable healthcare system in Hong Kong, and we all should be very thankful to Professor Chan.

Professor Chan rejoined HKU as a Professor of Nursing and Senior Advisor to the President's Office in July 2022. Retirement is not on her agenda yet, as there are still numerous meaningful tasks ahead. She has already obtained three generous donations to fund community-based research projects in healthy ageing, primary health care, and protecting children from exposure to second-hand smoke. She also serves as Director and Principal Investigator of the Generation Connect Project, the HKU Primary Health Care Academy, and a research project on protecting underprivileged children from exposure to second-hand smoke.

Professor Chan stands as an exemplary educator, renowned for her ability to challenge young minds, igniting their imagination and fostering a genuine passion for learning. Her remarkable pedagogy has earned her prestigious awards, including the Best Teacher Award in 1996, the Faculty Teaching Medal in 2005, and the Outstanding Teaching Award in 2009, one of the highest honours for teaching achievements conferred by HKU. Recognised as a leading authority in public health and tobacco control initiatives, she is frequently sought after for her insights and consultations at both the national and international levels. She also serves on global advisory boards in nursing leadership.

On the research front, she is one of the leading Nurse Scientists locally and internationally and was named among the world's top 2% most cited scientists in her specialised areas by Stanford University in 2020. Specialising in public health, management of tobacco dependency, prevention of second-hand smoke exposure in children, and primary healthcare system development, she has published extensively in international journals, with over 240 peer-reviewed scientific papers and more than 3,800 citations.

Professor Chan's exceptional accomplishments and tireless dedication have garnered her numerous distinguished accolades. She was bestowed with the distinguished titles of Fellow of the Faculty of Public Health (FFPH) and Honorary Fellow of Royal College of Physicians of the United Kingdom (RCP)(UK). She was the first nurse in Hong Kong to be awarded a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing (FAAN). In Hong Kong, in recognition of her significant contribution and dedicated service to the community, she was honoured with the Gold Bauhinia Star in 2022, and an Honorary Fellowship of the Hong Kong College of Health Services Executives and the Hong Kong Academy of Nursing.

Mr Pro-Chancellor, Professor Chan's indomitable spirit and tireless dedication will continue to be a driving force in shaping the future of healthcare not only in Hong Kong, but globally. In recognition of her outstanding contribution, I feel privileged and honoured to invite our President to present Professor Sophia Chan Siu-chee for the conferment of the degree of Doctor of Social Sciences, *honoris causa*.

Citation to be delivered by Professor Janet WONG Yuen-ha

榮譽社會科學博士

陳肇始教授, GBS, JP

副校監先生：

陳肇始教授的職業生涯橫跨健康護理、教育和政治三個領域，成就輝煌，令人欽佩。身為盡職盡責的兒科護士，她在深切治療部為患病嬰幼兒提供無微不至的護理；身為備受尊敬的教授，她在臨床環境中春風化雨，培育對整體治療過程作出貢獻的人才；身為磨砥刻厲的研究人員，她在公共衛生相關領域不斷開拓知識前沿。2012年，她進入香港特別行政區政府高層，先後擔任副局長和局長，負責為香港700萬人口制定有關食物、衛生和環境的政策，並為食物及環境衛生局轄下的政府部門和醫院管理局釐訂策略方向。2022年任期屆滿後，她重回闊別十年但內心始終記掛的大學校園，繼續從事教學和研究工作。

年輕時，陳教授從未想過要擔任高層職位。身為醫生的母親建議她接受護理教育，認為會令她終生受益，在她聽從的一刻，她的人生道路就有了意義非凡的轉折。她當年還是充滿陽光氣息、富有同情心的中學生，考入了一所護士學校，之後成為註冊護士。懷着追求卓越和提高護理水平的抱負，她前往倫敦接受兒科護理專業培訓。後來，為了進一步豐富專業知識，她不斷進修，先後獲得曼徹斯特大學的教育碩士學位、哈佛大學公共衛生學院的公共衛生碩士學位，以及香港大學哲學博士學位。

陳教授從臨床環境轉到教學課室和研究實驗室似乎是順理成章。然而，當她收到加入政府的邀請時，她就面臨極艱難的決定，尤其是考慮到她在學術界的地位和聲譽日隆。當時，她擔任香港大學李嘉誠醫學院助理院長一職，是護理學院獲得資助最多的研究人員，正在帶領多個研究項目。經過多個無眠的晚上反思和聆聽自己內心深處的聲音，她相信接受局長一職會是難能可貴的機會，可以讓她發揮自己的專長，為香港的整體福祉作出貢獻。她同時認為這是一個實現自己願景的機會，特別是在社區內推廣基層醫療保健和將香港變成無煙城市。她於是鼓起最大勇氣接受挑戰。

陳教授任職局長期間，制定和成功推行多項有關醫療、食物、環境衛生、農業和漁業的重要政策，貢獻殊深。她矢志保障和促進公眾健康，在全港 18 區設立地區康健中心，提供基層醫療服務；開設首間兒童醫院；倡導成立首間中醫醫院；推出香港癌症策略；禁止在香港使用電子煙和加熱煙草產品；禁用反式脂肪；以及允許合資格的非本地受訓香港醫生在公營醫療界執業，以解決醫生嚴重短缺的問題。

談到職業生涯中最重大的挑戰時，陳教授毫不猶豫地提到新冠疫情。在這場長達三年，深深困擾香港社會和經濟的疫情中，她承擔了多項艱巨的決策任務，包括通過旅遊限制防止疫症輸入、疫苗接種策略、社交距離措施、強制追蹤應用程式，以及隔離安排等。毫無疑問，這些決定引來政界人士的批評和社會各界的投訴，因為大家的日常生活受到影響。然而，陳教授恰如其分地應對了這些挑戰，她明白在抗疫過程中接納不同觀點和促進團結的重要。隨着香港逐漸復常，陳教授衷心感謝社會各界展現的適應能力和堅定不移的團結精神，並感謝無數幕後無名英雄的無私奉獻。

陳教授以推廣基層醫療為己任，去年 12 月，她在任內制定、極具開創意義的《基層醫療藍圖》正式發布，見證了她努力的成果，她感到非常欣慰。陳教授是具有遠見卓識的領導者，她倡議成立以預防為導向、以社區為基礎、以家庭為中心的基層醫療保健系統，通過減少對可避免的二級和三級醫療服務的需求，改善人口的整體健康狀況，減輕公立醫院系統的壓力。這是確保香港醫療系統可持續發展的關鍵一步，香港全人應該對陳教授衷心感銘。

陳教授於 2022 年 7 月重返香港大學，擔任護理學教授和校長辦公室資深顧問。她從沒有想過退休，因為還有許多有意義的工作等待她完成。她已獲得三項捐款，資助以社區為基礎的研究項目，包括健康老齡化、基層醫療和保護兒童免受二手煙危害。此外，她亦是香港大學基層健康服務學院、「耆青連心樂融融計劃」和一項有關保護弱勢社群兒童免受二手煙影響研究計劃的總監兼首席研究員。

陳教授是教育界的楷模，擅於啟迪年輕人思維，燃點他們的想像力和學習熱誠。她出類拔萃的教學方法為她贏得眾多殊榮，包括 1996 年的最佳教師獎、2005 年的學院教學獎章和 2009 年的傑出教學獎（香港大學有關教學成就的最高榮譽之一）。她獲公認為公共衛生和煙草控制領域的權威，經常獲邀在國家和國際層面發表見解和提供建議，也在世界多個關於領導護理行業的諮詢委員會擔任成員。

在研究方面，陳教授是本地和國際領先的護士科學家之一，2020 年斯坦福大學將她評為在其專業領域發表文章獲全球引用次數最多的 2% 科學家之一。她專注於研究公共衛生、對煙草依賴的處理、預防兒童吸入二手煙，以及基層醫療系統發展，在國際期刊上發表了大量論文，經同行評審的科學論文超過 240 篇，引用次數超過 3,800 次。

陳教授卓越的成就和無私的奉獻精神為她贏得了無數傑出榮譽。她獲授予英國公共衛生學院院士（FFPH）和英國皇家內科醫學院榮譽院士（RCP）（UK）的崇高榮銜，並且是香港首位獲得美國護理學會院士（FAAN）榮銜的護士。為表揚她對社會的重大貢獻與熱誠服務，她於 2022 年獲香港特別行政區政府頒授金紫荊星章，她也是香港醫務行政學院和香港護理專科學院的榮譽院士。

副校監先生，陳教授永不言休，公而忘私，將繼續成為推動香港以至全球未來護理發展的原動力。為表彰陳教授的傑出貢獻，本人恭請校長引介陳肇始教授接受本校的榮譽社會科學博士學位。

英文贊辭由黃婉霞教授宣讀