

**HKSH Family Medicine and
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Family Medicine



**養和家庭醫學及
基層醫療中心**

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What is Family Medicine?

As a distinctive medical specialty, family medicine offers primary care to the community. Being the first point of contact for patients in a health care process, family doctors strive to provide patient-centred care.

- Provide whole-person care which includes physical, psychological, familial, social and spiritual counselling
- Understand a patient's health condition, lifestyle and social background well, thereby enabling accurate diagnosis
- Develop lasting mutual trust with patients, which facilitates communication and takes the family's needs into due account
- Arrange specialty referrals as and when necessary to make the best use of resources
- Promote prevention of acute and chronic diseases, self-management of patients and public health education

What Do Family Doctors Do?

Holistic, or whole-person health is an important concept of family medicine, which means a family doctor views a specific disease beyond the physical manifestations and considers your social environment and emotional or psychological responses to physical illness. Not only do family doctors provide primary care with continuing, preventive, comprehensive and patient-centred services, they also shoulder such responsibilities as health promotion, prevention and support.

Family doctors serve as a point of entry for patients into the health care system. They don't just cure; they are health partners who should have a thorough understanding of your physical and psychological conditions, thereby giving appropriate health advice, initial management and proper referrals to specialists and other health professionals. It is possible to miss a diagnosis or overlap a treatment if patients - especially the elderly who usually have multiple problems - see several doctors or specialists on their own.

Let your family doctor be a health partner for yourself and your family. This ensures effective prevention and early detection of illnesses, enabling you to lead a healthy life and reduce medical cost.

How to Choose a Family Doctor

- Patient-doctor rapport is key - your family doctor should have good communication, problem-solving and management skills, as well as a caring, attentive and empathetic attitude
- The family doctor must have obtained relevant academic and professional qualifications, and keep abreast of rapid medical developments through continuing education
- Ideally, your doctor should also have a strong support network of allied health professionals, such as dietitians, physiotherapists and occupational therapists
- Check whether disease prevention services such as smoking cessation, vaccinations or cervical screening tests are provided
- If necessary, choose a doctor whose clinic is close to your home or office, and consider if the opening hours are convenient to you

