

\$10m medicine academy plan

By FIONA CHAN

A \$10 MILLION grant will be provided by the Government to establish an Academy of Medicine as an umbrella organisation to administer specialist training.

Principal Assistant Secretary for Health and Welfare, Mr Derek Gould, said that after the initial grant, the academy would be responsible for meeting all expenditure through training programme fees or membership fees.

Mr Gould said undergraduate medical training was now carried out by the two universities, and there was no legislation recognising specialist qualifications.

Some registered societies provided training and the Royal College of Medicine in Britain also ran examinations in Hongkong, but the significance of the new academy was that it would oversee and standardise medical specialist training, he said.

The academy is expected to be established under the Hongkong Academy of Medicine Bill which will be tabled in the Legislative Council in early March.

Mr Gould said there would be 11 colleges under the statutory body, including medicine, surgery and paediatric surgery.

Each college will be responsible for earning its running costs through training course charges and membership fees. Part of that revenue will go to the academy.

Mr Gould said he did not know how many specialists would be trained by the colleges. But he said that specialties outside those catered for by the 11 colleges could submit demands to establish new ones.

Each college is expected to have 50 staff.

"The two universities will probably provide some training facilities, but lecturers and training sections will be carried out by college members," Mr Gould said.

The training programmes will be decided by the colleges, but the framework will be left to the academy.

At present, a six-year course is planned, with an intermediate examination after the first three years and a final assessment at the end of six years.