

# \$100m sought for new medical college

By FIONA CHAN

A CAMPAIGN has been launched to raise \$100 million to establish Hongkong's first full-time college of traditional Chinese medicine.

A member of the college's board of directors, Dr Mabel Yang Mei-po, said the money would be used to construct a 10-storey building and buy teaching and research equipment.

The college is looking for private financial support and hopes the Government will grant it an 18,360-square-metre piece of land.

The board has received several verbal promises of donations, but no money so far.

Dr Yang said it had yet to make a formal request to the Government, but planned to push ahead in April with the official announcement of the new college.

After that, the board would plan a major fundraising programme which will include approaching the Royal Hongkong Jockey Club for a subsidy.

The College of Traditional Chinese Medicine, which has a seven-member

board of directors, was registered last year.

Board members include two senior members of a Chinese medicine association as well as Dr Yang, who is a physiology lecturer at Hongkong University.

She is also a member of the working party on Chinese medicine commissioned by the Secretary for Health and Welfare, Mrs Elizabeth Wong Chien Chien.

A government spokesman was unable to say whether the Government would be setting up its own college of traditional medicine. It was still waiting for the working party's recommendations, he said.

Another board member, Professor Cheung Tai-chiu, former deputy dean of Jinan University's medical college on the mainland, said the new college would provide full-time education for newcomers and refresher courses for practising professionals.

"Although existing Chinese medicine institutes contribute a lot to the profession, they only provide part-time courses to differ-

ent people, including outsiders like lawyers and workers. This makes it very difficult to guarantee academic standards," Professor Cheung said.

The blueprint of the future college calls for several sub-colleges, each responsible for training in a different field.

A general college of Chinese medicine is to be set up to provide five-year training courses for secondary school leavers.

Professor Cheung said between 40 and 50 students would be enrolled annually.

He said a second college would provide refresher courses and another would conduct research.

The latest survey figures show 65 per cent of traditional practitioners in the territory claim to have been trained by apprenticeship and 31 per cent say they are self-taught.

Professor Cheung said the college was collaborating with Hongkong University's School of Professional and Continuing Education to run a higher diploma course on Chinese medicine to be introduced this summer for practitioners.