

Recent Activities of the Miyazaki Medical Association

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The Land of Mythology

Miyazaki Prefecture is located on the southern tip of Kyushu on the Pacific Ocean side and enjoys a very moderate climate. Its principal industries are agriculture and tourism. It has a population of approximately 1.14 million. The Miyazaki Medical Association (MiMA) has a membership of 1,694.

Miyazaki is a land of ancient myths and legends, with Miyazaki Shrine located in the central part of the prefecture and Udo Shrine in the southern area along the Nichinan Coast. Miyazaki Shrine is a stately sanctum, and Udo Shrine offers scenic views.

The mythology of Himuka that are recounted in Kojiki, which is considered to be Japan's earliest history book, tells of many deities of the heavens, the land, and the sea.

Miyazaki Shrine is dedicated to Emperor Jimmu, who is said to be the first emperor of Japan, and Udo Shrine to his father Ugayafukiaezu-no-Mikoto.

Completion of the new Medical Association Office Building

The construction of the new office building that started on November 5, 2006, was completed on January 13, 2008. A grand opening ceremony was held for the new building, with Shinto rites and a preview tour held at the new building and a commemorative event taking place at a hotel in the prefecture.

In the commemorative concert held on that occasion, works by Johan Strauss were per-



formed by the Miyazaki Junior Orchestra (50 members). A commemorative lecture was given by Mr. Kunio Yanagida, non-fiction writer, on “Look into the Heart, Thoughts on Life – Living for Tomorrow.” Both the commemorative concert and lecture were opened to the citizens and drew an audience of over 600. In the opening ceremony that followed, Dr. Takeshima, a Vice-President of the Japan Medical Association (JMA), as well as other guests such as the Miyazaki Governor, gave speeches.

Furthermore, Dr. Kihachiro Hata, a President of the MiMA, whose tenure had lasted 10 years, retired, as if in time with the completion of the new official building. Dr. Masataka Inakura took office on April 1, 2008, and a new board was inaugurated. The major issues in the FY 2008 MiMA Plan laid down by President Inakura are as follows:

1. Promote healthcare reform from the perspective of the citizens of the prefecture
2. Maintain the universal health insurance system that ensures sufficient healthcare
3. Action to prevent the deterioration of medical practice

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4. Promote steady management
5. Respond to reforms in healthcare and long-term insurance systems
6. Correct the policy to increase patient co-payment and expand disparities in healthcare
7. Promote active advocacy and external public relations

Clinical Trial Promotion Program

Starting in 2006, the MiMA Clinical Trial Promotion Center was set up as an assistant project supported by the JMA Center for Clinical Trials.

The objective of the center is to allow clinical trial participation not only by large hospitals, but also by clinics.

Clinical trials require a heavy burden which includes informed consent and patient safety as well as the establishment of a institutional review board (IRB) in compliance with good clinical practice (GCP) standards for clinical trials of pharmaceutical products, facilities and equipment, and administrative work such as the production and storage of a huge amount of documents.

The MiMA Clinical Trial Promotion Center provides proxy service in establishing IRBs and in document production and management, and dispatches clinical research coordinators (CRCs) to clinics.

At present, clinical trials are underway for 4 protocols by 3 clinical trial clients. The MiMA plans to promote further development of a support system that encourages the participation of more medical institutions.

New Teleconferencing System

With the construction of the new office building, the teleconferencing system had been updated to enable simultaneous broadcast of teleconferences at eight local medical associations in the prefecture. Making use of optical circuits of NTT West Japan and teleconferencing system equipment from Sony, the system as a whole, including equipment and optical circuit installation expenses, costs roughly 9.15 million yen (US\$96,012).^{*2}

The system's slogan is "access to conference venues from anywhere in the prefecture within 30 minutes," enabling any member to participate in prefecture-wide teleconferences at the nearest local medical association office. The system is being used very effectively at present.

There is also a request in the recommendations of the MiMA's Committee on Continuous Academic Medical Education to the President of the MiMA, asking that the JMA and other organizations approve of accreditation for participation in lectures and workshops organized with the teleconferencing system.

Looking at Miyazaki from a geographical viewpoint, the nearest seats of national government are Seoul, Pyongyang, Taipei, and Beijing, in the order of distance. Tokyo is significantly far from Miyazaki. For members of the JMA residing in remote areas with underdeveloped transportation systems, accreditation of training with the teleconferencing system is something that is strongly desired.

*2 Yen/dollar exchange rate: 1 US dollar=95 yen.