

## Activities and Pursuits of the Saitama Medical University Medical Association

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Established in 1972, Saitama Medical University (SMU) is a comprehensive medical school, which now includes the Faculty of Medicine, and the Faculty of Health and Medical Care. With the success of continuing reforms in medical education, Faculty of Medicine is improving its educational achievement and held in more esteem.

In concurrence with the opening of the university, SMU Hospital was born, mainly from the Moro Hospital that was located in Moroyama Town. Since, the Saitama Medical Center was founded in Kawagoe City in 1985, the Saitama Medical University Kawagoe Clinic was also founded in Kawagoe City in 2004, and the Saitama International Medical Center was founded in Hidaka City in 2006. All of these facilities have 600 beds or more excepting the Kawagoe Clinic.

Approved as an advanced treatment hospital by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan in 1994, the SMU Hospital provides high-level healthcare, operating as a core facility in community healthcare and healthcare education in the region. The Saitama Medical Center, which includes an advanced emergency care center and comprehensive perinatal care center, was designated as a base hospital for the doctor helicopter system by Saitama Prefecture in August 2007. The Saitama International Medical Center is also designated as a doctor helicopter base hospital under the Fourth Saitama Prefecture Regional Healthcare Plan. The center provides advanced emergency care specializing in highly advanced medicine such as cancer and cardiology. Kawagoe Clinic provides highly specialized healthcare as a distinctive medical facility.

The SMU Medical Association was launched in 2000 under the leadership of Director Kiyohiro Maruki. Consisting of SMU Hospital physicians,

we belong to the Saitama Medical Association, which is subordinate to the Japan Medical Association (JMA). Currently composed of and administered by 140 member physicians, the association contributes to the improvement of community healthcare and social welfare in the region. In August 2008, the National Liaison Council of University Medical Associations was launched so that university medical associations as a group could address the common issues shared among university hospitals throughout the country. We would expect the council to influence the government through the JMA on many issues.

Recent years have seen a succession of revisions to the legal and regulatory systems governing university hospitals and demand for new initiatives on the front lines of healthcare. Financial management has become a major issue for hospitals and clinics. The contraction of medical availability and reconstruction of healthcare provision systems attendant on the shortages of physicians and nurses and falling number of hospital physicians now constitute social issues of major importance. Circumstances demand that we revisit the way in which we provide medical care, particularly in pediatrics, obstetrics and emergency care.

The SMU Medical Association is proposing and conducting specific programs for various projects. To begin with, we are collaborating with Saitama Prefecture Health Promotion to provide cancer screening programs in the towns of Moroyama and Ogose, in which some 1,400 residents are estimated to undergo medical examinations annually.

The SMU Hospital provides nighttime emergency care. For the admission of emergency

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patients, we have been performing tasks pertaining to the regional hospital rotation program system for the Sakado-Hanno district including making contracts for the subsidy. We also implemented reforms for pediatric examinations in nighttime and weekends/holidays, which are performed in collaboration with other medical facilities in the community. Along with the support of Saitama Prefecture for treating pediatric emergency patients at university hospitals, we established a system in which both university pediatricians and physicians who belong to local medical associations participate. This new system increased the healthcare income in emergency care, enabling small payments to local physicians for their assistance, and has greatly improved the work condition of university pediatricians. We shall continue to enrich pediatric medicine.

As a part of educational program, we cosponsor public lectures for the general public on healthcare matters with SMU and its affiliated hospitals. These public lectures have been quite successful, attracting many participants each time. Our activities are posted on the official

website of SMU Medical Association for the general public and non-university physicians. Communication among members is further reinforced by a mailing list, which is used to distribute relevant information and documents.

In addition, we offer another major project, SMU Medical Association Industrial Medicine Training Course. Held annually in mid-October with a maximum enrollment of 200, this 2-day course for 14 units is open to the members of the SMU Medical Association, the alumni members, and the members of the Saitama Medical Association and the JMA. Now in its twelfth year, the course is attracting participants from both inside and outside the prefecture.

We shall continue to work diligently on individual activities of our medical association and contribute to preventive medicine in the community in cooperation with local administration and local medical associations. We encourage hospital doctors to get more involved in our medical association. With the plans outlined above as the core, we will thrive to enhance SMU Medical Association activities.



Saitama Medical University Hospital



Saitama Medical Center



Saitama Medical University International Medical Center



Saitama Medical University Kawagoe Clinic