

President's Greeting

“People – epidemiology – people” and “Knowledge of the Orient”



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Epidemiology is called a “population science” in which we observe the frequency of a particular health event in a group of people, analyze the factors for its generation, promotion, and suppression, attempt to resolve the health issue through intervening in these factors, and provide the methodology that leads to actual practice. In other words, studies in epidemiology are performed in human populations, and require the support of many people for their advancement. That is why I subtitled this greeting with the expression “people – epidemiology – people.”

In January 2013, the society secretariat was established in a fixed location. This was done to enhance and continue the secretariat's functions from the previous system, in which the secretariat was transferred to the president's organization at the election of each of my predecessors. We have now fixed the new secretariat in the district of Hongo, the academic heart of Tokyo. Secretarial support to members and the various society committees are now ongoing, and our activities in internationalization is actively expanding.

The number of Society members reached 1,680 on March 1st, 2014, a six-fold increase over the 243 at our inception in 1991. Thanks to the efforts of our predecessors the importance of epidemiology is increasingly recognized in other fields, including clinical medicine, pharmacy and nursing, among others. Efforts to heighten the academic status of epidemiology require a deeper understanding of its purpose among researchers and practitioners in other fields, and the general public. For this reason, our publicity and training efforts include the "youth rally", a place of free and vigorous debate. We also promote personal exchange through co-sponsored activities with societies in other fields. The *Journal of Epidemiology* is the "face" of the society. To enhance the appeal of the Journal and improve its impact (2.113 in 2012), we will expand our editing and publishing works, and internationalize the editorial board and peer review committee. These efforts will improve the quality and quantity of submissions and accepted papers from Japan and overseas.

My second subtitle was "Knowledge of the Orient". Various health problems associated with a declining birth rate and aging are global challenges, not limited in Japan. The increasing complexity and diversity of these health problems will place ever greater demand on the training and career development of people with knowledge and experience in epidemiology and its technology. Because health problems occur over the global scale, dealing only with the "knowledge of the West" appears insufficient; rather, we need to make more active use of the "knowledge of the Orient". While the knowledge of the West is excellent in individual analysis, the knowledge of the East has value in ideas involving cooperation, integration, continuity, and the concept of circulation. Given that Japanese activity is expected to lead Asia in various fields, we should be aware of our strengths in "knowledge of the Orient," and put them to use in the field of epidemiology. Looking back at the history of Japan, advanced ideas in culture, economy,

politics, and academics were originally introduced from China, South Korea, and other countries. Epidemiology in Japan has often focused on problems involving environmental pollution, infectious diseases, chronic diseases, mental diseases and the like, and has made many achievements in fields such as environmental health, occupational health, maternal and child health, school health, adult and elderly health, and mental health. As a society, one of our missions is to advance and codify the “knowledge of the East” from these achievements and knowledge accumulated to date, while also learning from other foreign countries.

From this position, our goal is to enrich the society’s activities so that it becomes a place of interaction not only for researchers in epidemiology but also in other fields: clinical doctors, dentists, pharmacists, nurses, public health nurses, dietitians, bachelor-level students, occupational therapists, psychologists, researchers in social science, and people engaged in social science. We look forward to the active participation of people who are interested in the Society and its aims.

Accordingly, I heartily invite the active involvement of every member, councilor, director, auditor, and honorary member of the Japan Epidemiological Association. Your ongoing participation, support, and advice to the JEA is most warmly welcomed.