

# The current status of cancer rehabilitation in nationwide designated cancer center hospitals in Japan

T. Tsuji<sup>1</sup>, R. Sekine<sup>2</sup>, K. Mori<sup>3</sup>, E. Nakata<sup>4</sup>, H. Sato<sup>5</sup>, A. Tanuma<sup>6</sup>, J. Kawakami<sup>7</sup>, H. Kagaya<sup>8</sup>

1 Keio University School of Medicine, Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, Tokyo, Japan

2 Kameda Medical Center, Department of Pain and Palliative Care, Kamogawa, Japan

3 Shizuoka Cancer Center, Clinical Research Center, Nagaizumi, Japan

4 National Hospital Organization Shikoku Cancer Center, Department of Rehabilitation, Matsuyama, Japan

5 Saitama Medical University International Medical Center, Division of Gastrointestinal Surgery, Hidaka, Japan

6 Shizuoka Cancer Center, Division of Rehabilitation Medicine, Nagaizumi, Japan

7 Shiga Medical Center for Adults, Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, Moriyama, Japan

8 School of Medicine Fujita Health University, Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, Toyoake, Japan



## INTRODUCTION

In 2006, the **National Cancer Control Act** was enacted by the Japanese government.

It stipulates that the government has a basic responsibility to maintain and improve the **quality of convalescent care** for patients with cancer. However, cancer care in Japan is still lacking in comprehensive support that covers all aspects from treatment aimed at recovery to **rehabilitation** focusing on QOL.

As part of its measures, the **CAREER (Cancer Rehabil. Educational Program for Rehabil. Teams)** workshop has been held since 2007.

**Cancer Patient Rehabilitation fee in the inpatient setting** has been covered by national health system since 2010FY. However, those in the outpatient setting have not covered yet.

Even now, cancer rehabilitation resources are still insufficient in Japan.

## OBJECTIVES

This aim is to assess the **current status of cancer rehabilitation** in nationwide designated cancer center hospitals in Japan.

## METHODS

We conducted a **questionnaire survey** for rehabilitation group leaders of **427 designated cancer center hospitals** in Nov. and Dec. 2016.

Main outcomes were rate of **inpatient and outpatient cancer rehabilitation services**.

## DISCUSSION

### *Development of the Cancer Rehabilitation in Japan*

In order to develop cancer rehabilitation in Japan, at first we should encourage **clinical research work**, next we have to appraise a lot of research critically and establish the **clinical guidelines**, thirdly, we have to plan and manage the **training program** based on the clinical guidelines to professions, finally, we will achieve better clinical practice. Moreover, we pick up clinical question during practice and link to the **next research work**. This is a **good model**.

In current status of cancer rehabilitation in Japan, **1) research**; Cancer Rehabilitation Annual meeting has been held to encourage clinical research work, **2) guidelines**; Cancer rehabilitation clinical practice guidelines have just established (we have just started to Compile 2<sup>nd</sup> version), **3) training**; CAREER workshop has been training cancer rehabilitation professions, and **4) practice**; Cancer Patient Rehabilitation fee in the inpatient setting has been covered by national health system.

These various developments demonstrate that there has been rapid progress in the field of rehabilitation in cancer treatment. However, these developments are **mainly in the inpatient setting**.

Our next step, we will focus on not only inpatient but also **outpatient setting** because cancer patients at home have various complications, sequelae, decrease of ADL and QOL during/after cancer treatment such as surgery, chemotherapy, or radiation therapy.

## CONCLUSIONS

We found that unmet needs for outpatient cancer rehabilitation in cancer center hospitals exist.

It was suggested that lack of highly skilled cancer rehabilitation therapists was one of the main reasons that they had not introduced it.

## RESULTS

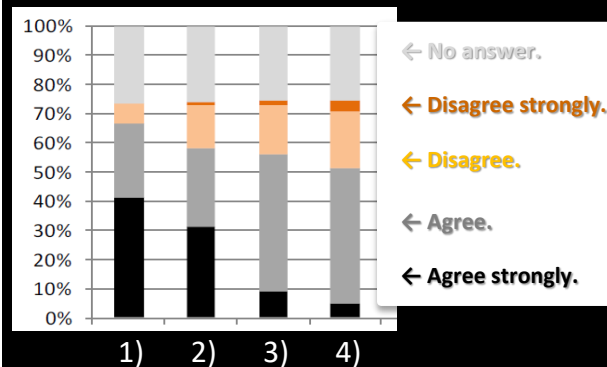
A total of 188 participated, with a **response rate** of **44.0%**.

The mean **number of rehabilitation therapists** (physical, occupational, and speech therapists) is **28.6**. Rate of certified **cancer rehabilitation therapists** are **only 37.8%** (mean number, 10.8) among them.

**88.9%** of designated cancer center hospitals provided cancer rehabilitation services in the **inpatient setting**.

On the other hand, only **24.0%** of them provided cancer rehabilitation services in the **outpatient setting**. However, **71.0%** of responders answered that **outpatient cancer rehabilitation was required**.

### **The reasons that cancer rehabilitation services in the outpatient setting are not provided.**



- 1) The services aren't covered by **national insurance system**.
- 2) They are **lacking** in rehabilitation staffs.
- 3) There are not any **educational programs** for outpatient cancer rehabilitation.
- 4) Japanese evidence-based clinical **guidelines** for outpatient cancer rehabilitation are not compiled.