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International Symposium Charts Asia's Clinical Trial Future

BANGKOK — October, 2025

At The Okura Prestige Bangkok, more than 120 delegates from across Asia gathered for the ATLAS–ARISE–PMDA International Symposium 2025, a landmark event aimed at building a unified clinical trial ecosystem in the region. The symposium, jointly organized by ATLAS (Asian Clinical Trials Network for Cancers Project, NCC), ARISE (ARO Alliance for Southeast & East Asia, JIHS), and Japan's Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Agency (PMDA), marked the fifth anniversary of ATLAS and underscored Asia's growing influence in global drug development.

Among the distinguished guests were former Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare, Keizo Takemi and Masato Ohtaka, Japan's Ambassador to Thailand. The event drew 114 participants from institutions including JICA, alongside 13 representatives from JIHS.

“Japan will lead global clinical development from Asia,” declared Hideyo Miyazaki, Hospital Director of the National Center for Global Health and Medicine, during closing remarks—a message that echoed through sessions on innovation, regulation, and collaboration.

Highlights

- ✓ **Opening:** Under the banner “Building Asia’s Future Through Collaboration,” JIHS Executive Director Teiji Takei emphasized ARISE’s achievements and the urgency of regional cooperation amid geopolitical uncertainty.
- ✓ **ATLAS Sessions:** Results from multinational trials—MASTER KEY Asia and Project CAD—were presented, alongside strategic priorities: expanding investigator-led trials, nurturing early-career researchers, and using AI for translation and reporting.
- ✓ **ARISE Session:** Chaired by Wataru Sugiura, Director of the JIHS Clinical Research Center, discussions focused on pandemic-readiness infrastructure: eConsent, decentralized clinical trials (DCT), single IRB models, and digital acceleration.
- ✓ **Comprehensive Discussion:** Leaders assessed the model for Asia-led clinical development, highlighting industry-driven trials and patient advocacy partnerships.



Japanese Trainees Gain Hands-On Experience in Vietnam

HANOI — September, 2025

For nine days in September, 21 Japanese participants immersed themselves in the realities of global health during a field training program in Vietnam, part of an annual initiative by the Bureau of Global Health Cooperation to cultivate professionals for international health work.

The program began with lectures and exercises at JIHS in Tokyo, followed by intensive on-site training. Trainees visited hospitals and community health centers and worked in mixed teams with local staff.



At Hoa Binh General Hospital, participants proposed intervention strategies for three pressing issues identified by the hospital. The group also toured Bach Mai Hospital in Hanoi—one of JIHS's partner institutions—and regional centers to gain a deeper understanding of Vietnam's healthcare system.

“This program is not just about learning; it’s about building trust and partnerships that strengthen resilience,” a JIHS coordinator said.

Japan's Public Health Leaders Gather in Shizuoka

SHIZUOKA — October, 2025

The 84th Annual Meeting of the Japan Public Health Association convened at Granship Convention Center, drawing experts nationwide to debate the future of health crisis management and infectious disease preparedness.

JIHS played a prominent role, hosting multiple symposiums and an exhibition booth that attracted more than 370 visitors. Discussions ranged from lessons learned during the pandemic to strategies for resilience and reform.

Key Sessions

- ✓ Japan's Health Crisis Management: Current Status and Outlook — Senior officials from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and the Cabinet Secretariat joined JIHS leadership to assess post-pandemic priorities.
- ✓ Building a New Era of Infectious Disease Crisis Management — The strengths of JIHS were discussed.
- ✓ Human Resource Development for Infectious Disease Response — Speakers underscored cross-disciplinary training and leadership as essential to future preparedness.

At the JIHS booth, initiatives including iCROWN, ARISE, and J-GRID+ drew significant interest, reflecting momentum in collaborative networks.



Japan Marks 20 Years of Disaster Medical Assistance Teams

TOKYO — October, 2025

More than 200 participants, including lawmakers, government officials, medical professionals, and disaster response experts, gathered to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Japan's Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) program. Hosted by JIHS, the ceremony honored two decades of lifesaving work.

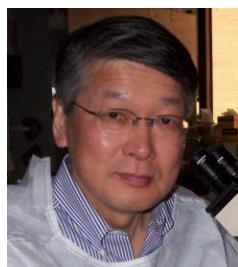
JIHS President Norihiro Kokudo opened with remarks highlighting DMAT's integration into JIHS as a pivotal step toward strengthening Japan's crisis management system. Commendations were presented to members with outstanding service.

In a keynote, Director General of DMAT Secretariat Yuichi Koido traced the program's evolution from its founding to its present role in national preparedness and outlined future priorities. A tribute honored Dr. Hiroshi Henmi, the late founder of DMAT and former director of the Disaster Medical Center.

A reception concluded the event, with participants reaffirming commitment to advancing disaster medicine.

JIHS Medical Leaders Honored for Breakthroughs and Service

Four distinguished figures of JIHS received national and industry accolades this autumn, underscoring leadership in global health, emergency medicine, and innovation



Hiroaki Mitsuya Named Person of Cultural Merit — The Director of the National Institute of Global Health and Medicine was recognized for pioneering HIV/AIDS therapies, including the development of AZT and other antiretrovirals that transformed HIV care.



Kojiro Ueki Awarded the Order of the Purple Ribbon — The Diabetes Research Center Director was honored for groundbreaking work on insulin mechanisms and complications, informing new treatment strategies.



Yuichi Koido Wins Minister's Award for Emergency Medicine — The Director General of DMAT Secretariat received the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications Award for decades of service shaping disaster and emergency medical systems.

Yutaka Maruoka Receives MDF Special Prize — The Chief of Oral Surgery at the National Center for Global Health and Medicine was recognized for a surgical pen that draws directly on bone using safe, durable ink—enhancing precision in operating rooms.



A Gentle Visitor Brings Comfort to Hospital Rooms

The door opens quietly, and a small dog named Mirai pads into the room. For a moment, the sterile hospital environment softens. “Fluffy... so fluffy,” whispers a child, reaching out as the therapy dog settles gently on their lap.

This was the third installment of JIHS’s therapy dog program—an initiative conceived before the pandemic, sustained virtually with the Japan Rescue Association, and realized in-person in 2024. The latest event introduced private room visits, allowing patients to spend quiet time with the dogs.

“Dogs don’t ask questions. They just stay,” a staff member said. “That presence can be more healing than medicine.” The program’s continuity and expansion aim to bring warmth and connection to patients, especially children who often feel passive in clinical environments.



Infectious Disease Leadership Training Expands in Kanagawa

KANAGAWA — October, 2025

JIHS launched an intensive on-the-job training (OJT) program in Kanagawa Prefecture as part of a long-term leadership initiative commissioned by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. The program equips experienced professionals with cross-disciplinary skills to lead regional responses to future outbreaks.

Beginning October 1, trainees rotated through the Kanagawa Prefectural Government, local health centers, and research facilities including the Kawasaki City Institute for Public Health and Yokohama City Health and Safety Division. Participants also shared workforce strategies with officials from Shiga Prefecture.

In a special lecture, Dr. Kunio Yano, Special Advisor on Infection Control at Hamamatsu Medical Center, noted that familiar terms and frameworks—“droplet” and “airborne transmission”—may yield to the broader notion of air-mediated spread, placing ventilation at the core of facility-level infection control.



Trainees later led a public forum at the Annual Meeting of the Japanese Society of Public Health, presenting case studies and engaging in policy discussions with national experts.

Japan Hosts Infectious Disease Intelligence Training

TOKYO — August, 2025

The National Institute of Infectious Diseases (NIID) conducted an intensive International Infectious Disease Intelligence Training under the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's global crisis management framework. About 80 participants attended, including Foreign Ministry medical officers and IDES trainees, with additional online and on-demand participation.

Dr. Tomoya Saito, Director of Intelligence and Emergency Response, JIHS's Bureau of Health Security and Management, outlined Japan's domestic intelligence coordination system. Guest speaker Atsumori Ueda, visiting researcher at LAC National Security Institute, shared strategies for gathering intelligence during overseas deployments.

Group discussions tackled challenges experienced during COVID-19—balancing the urgency of information with accuracy and reliability—and emphasized practical approaches to real-time data collection and analysis in emergencies.



Young Researchers Shine

at NIGHM Summer Retreat

TOKYO — August, 2025

The National Institute of Global Health and Medicine (NIGHM) hosted its annual Summer Research Retreat, offering early-career scientists a platform for rigorous presentation and cross-disciplinary exchange.

Over two days, attendees delivered 22 oral presentations and 27 poster sessions, spanning hematopoietic stem cell biology, malaria genetics, and lipid metabolism. Peer voting determined award recipients:



Best Presentation: Takayuki Morikawa, Senior Researcher (Hematopoietic Systems), for work on age-related disruptions in stem cell homing.



Outstanding Research Award: Mai Nakajima, Senior Researcher (Tropical Medicine), for insights into chromatin-mediated regulation of sexual genes in malaria parasites.



Best Poster Award: Yu Teramura, Graduate Researcher (Lipid Life Sciences), for findings on DHA phospholipid synthesis and auditory function.

Opening remarks by Hiroaki Mitsuya, NIGHM Director, and Norihiro Kokudo, JIHS President, underscored the retreat's role in advancing translational research. The event concluded with an awards ceremony and a call to deepen ties between the clinic and the laboratory.

Science Comes Alive

at NIID's Annual Open House

The Murayama Campus (July 26) and Toyama Campus (September 15) of the National Institute of Infectious Diseases (NIID) welcomed 864 visitors for a hands-on look at how science protects everyday life.

Children peered through microscopes. Families tried experiments with real lab instruments. Live science shows and interactive quizzes turned complex concepts into accessible learning. Talks by NIID researchers explored topics from pandemic preparedness to vaccine development.

Many visitors left saying, “We’ll be back next year.” With public interest rising, NIID plans to continue the open house tradition—making science not just informative, but inviting.

Murayama Campus on July 26



Toyama Campus on September 15

