New Year’s Greetings from JNA President, Setsuko Hisatsune

Toward a new era of nursing as a leadership for change

Happy New Year to fellow nursing professionals around the world! I hope all of you have made a good start in 2006. In Japan, the year 2006 is the crucial year that some reforms, such as the healthcare reforms and revision of medical treatment fees and long-term care service fee will be taken place. Last year, I became the JNA President in the middle of the change.

A substantial reform never happens when a situation is stable. It only takes place under critical conditions as we are experiencing today and it is inevitably accompanied by pain. Taking the crisis as a big opportunity, I have been committed to various processes of nursing policies with all JNA staffs.

One of our achievements is the revision of medical treatment fees. JNA welcomes the prospect that the government will pass a bill on the improvement of effective staffing level of healthcare professionals for the first time in 12 years. The realization of revised effective staffing level of nurses will be the key of the survival of hospitals. It is natural that the public select hospitals where they can receive a high-level of nursing care. To meet the demand of patients, most hospitals may rush to increase the number of nurses and it is likely to face the difficulty of recruitment because of the temporary shortage of nurses. I hope nursing managers deal with such difficulties in a resolute attitude.

Another important issue is nurses leaving profession. We need to take every possible measure that we can reduce the number of nurses leaving. We should ask ourselves why our colleagues are leaving and analyze the major causes to figure out how we can improve the working environment or conditions for the longer retention of nurses. Our goal is to offer a better quality of nursing with more experienced and skilled nurses, keeping the number of new hires remained, by tackling the problem.

I believe that we are moving into a new era that nursing takes leadership for change. When I witnessed JNA’s presidents from all over the world demonstrating their leadership in nursing education and nursing practices in the ICN Asia Work Force Forum last year, I became more convinced of the nursing leadership. I would like to remind all nurses to confront reforms with the mind-set of "changing yourself first". Together with nurses, JNA will endeavor to tackle reforms such as healthcare reform to have a better working environment. Now it’s time to urge public to show "the power of nursing" by using the full capability of nurses. Let us move forward to a better nursing.

JNA will co-host next CNR/ICN conference in May, 2007. We are looking forward to welcoming many participants from all over the world.

Dr. Setsuko Hisatsune, JNA President 2005-2007

Dr. Setsuko Hisatsune was elected as a new President of Japanese Nursing Association (JNA) for the term 2005-2007 at the election held during the JNA General Convention from May 16-17. She is the 11th president in the JNA history of 59-year-old history. Dr. Hisatsune, who has served as a chief nurse for the Japanese government and also as a nursing educator at baccalaureate and graduate levels, spoke of her aspiration to the JNA Public Relations Department that her aim is to empower and further strengthen JNA. She stated that JNA is able to contribute to patient safety through gaining a greater and more influential voice in facilitating quality improvement in nursing care and work environment. One of her specific goals is to promote adequate nursing staff assignment through JNA approaches to health and labor policies. She pointed out that the staffing in Japan is worst among the developed countries and improvement is necessary for quality nursing care. She also aims to lead JNA to promote effective collaborative work among health professions and to enhance a system to disseminate nursing information.
Dr. Hiroko Minami, ICN President 2005-2009

Dr. Hiroko Minami, former JNA President, was elected the 25th ICN President for the next quadrennial at the ICN Board Member election held on May 22 during the Council of National Representatives in Taiwan to which representatives from 104 nurses associations attended. Two candidates ran for the presidential election: Dr. Ginette Rodgers, former President of Canadian Nurses Association, was the opponent to Dr. Minami. The result was the landslide victory of Dr. Minami with 61 votes against 37 votes of Dr. Rodgers. The watchword that the new ICN president chose to lead her term was "harmony," which indicates her leadership goal of bridging different cultures among nations and of achieving international nursing collaboration. Dr. Minami has contributed nationally to nursing education as a college professor and to policy making as a government committee member, and internationally as ICN Board Member for two terms. She is the first Japanese ICN President and the second from Asian countries.

2005 JNA GENERAL CONVENTION

Japanese Nursing Association (JNA) held its General Convention in Chiba Prefecture on May 16 and 17, 2005. Over 9,200 members attended.

New Board Members
At the board members election held during the convention, Dr. T. Ibe and Dr. T. Abe were elected Vice Presidents. For Dr. Abe, this is her second term. Mr. S. Ogawa, a newly-appointed Executive Officer, is the first male in the 59-year-old JNA history to serve as a Board Member.

JNA Project Reports and Proposals
Dr. Keiko Okaya, JNA Executive Director (ED), reported JNA Projects conducted in FY2004 and introduced FY2005 Project Proposals. (1) Anti-Smoking Declaration for Nursing Professionals: Starting in 2001, JNA has been campaigning for smoking cessation of nurses. 40,000 pamphlets appealing the issue have been disseminated to institutions including educational facilities, which will contribute to enhancing the anti-smoking education for students in nursing schools and high schools. (2) Liability Insurance Program for the Nursing Professionals: To deal with an issue that only a quarter of JNA members have become insurers after seven years since the program was established by the then Ministry of Finance, Ms. M. Kusumoto, the Executive Officer in charge, has announced that a campaign to promote the insurance enrollment is to be focused for the FY2005. (3) Information Gathering and Analysis for Risk Management: Requests were presented from the floor for collaboration with Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) and for full-time staffing of risk management experts at educational facilities and advanced treatment hospitals. In response to the requests, Ms. Kusumoto, the Executive Officer in charge, said that JNA will promote trainings in risk management and will support in consultation. (4) The major FY2005 Projects that are newly proposed are as follows: A research for expanding nursing discretion, a research of nursing license renewal system, an around-the-clock nursing service model project for ALS patients, and a study on an e-learning system for visiting nursing.

Adoption of the JNA Resolution for FY2005
"Nurses Networking to Support National Safety and Reassurance: Serving Everybody Anytime Anywhere" was adopted as the FY2005 JNA Resolution. Allegedly the slogan is based on the JNA Constitution Article 3 which states that the nurses’ responsibilities involve contributions to improve the national health and welfare.

Promoting Institutionalization of Continuing Education for New Graduates
A research result was reported that 8.5% of the new graduate nurses left job within a year from employment. Ms. C. Hirose, the Executive Officer in charge of the JNA projects regarding the continuing education programs for new graduates, proposed that the programs should be promptly institutionalized to prevent further turnover. The proposal was supported by the majority.

Professional Committee Meetings
Following the General Convention, the Professional Committee Meetings were held on May 18 on public health nursing, midwifery and nursing. 336 attended the Professional Committee Meeting (PCM) on Public Health Nursing, in which the symposium was held on human resources development assistance. At the PCM on Midwifery to which 398 midwives participated, the following issues were discussed: Promotion of the installation of maternity centers within hospitals, approaches to adolescence issues including sex education, and institutionalization of the new graduate public health nurses. 4,222 nurses attended the PCM on Nursing in which a symposium was held on occupational health issues for nurses that includes support for mental health among nurses.
JNA Participates to the 23rd ICN Quadrennial Congress in Taiwan

The International Council of Nurses (ICN) Conference of National Representatives (CNR) and 23rd ICN Quadrennial Congress were held in Taipei, Taiwan from May 21 to 26. Among approximately 4,000 participants to the Congress from 148 countries, more than 500 were from Japan. Information regarding Japanese nursing was disseminated through 128 presentations made by Japanese nurses in symposiums, workshop and poster presentation sessions.

JNA hosted Two Symposiums: Town healthcare room and Japan’s disaster nursing NGO’s

Ms. M. Yamazaki, former JNA Executive Officer, explained that JNA has been promoting the Town Healthcare Room (THM) Project since 2000 in collaboration with the local nursing associations as an innovative model for the delivery of nursing services to the public. THM provides nurse-led health care counseling and education services along with support opportunities for social support and networking. Four nursing leaders from Japan made reports on the following issues: nursing consultation in communities, development of nursing consultation IT software, support for outpatients receiving palliative care and achievements of Town Health Posts developed through the reconstruction activities in the areas destroyed by the Hanshin-Awaji Great Earthquake.

There were over 110 people in the audience of the other symposium hosted by JNA entitled “Japan’s disaster nursing NGOs and their operations in and outside Japan.” The current status and future tasks of three disaster nursing NGOs in Japan were presented as follows: JNA’s disaster nursing activities --- Network with prefectural nursing associations, international disaster nursing operations by JNA, JSDN (Japan Society of Disaster Nursing)’s disaster nursing activities --- frontline operations based on the disaster network system, and JRCS (Japanese Red Cross Society)’s disaster nursing activities in Japan and abroad.

Student Assembly

JNA dispatched three delegates to the Student Assembly held on May 23 to which 130 students from 14 countries attended to discuss issues specific to nursing students. 17 students from Japan also participated to the Assembly. "Many of the delegates were presidents and vice-presidents of the nursing student organizations. The organizational strength of nursing students in foreign countries is so impressive," said Ms. S. Fujinaka, one of the Japanese delegates. Ms. S. Oda, one of the Japanese participants, commented that it was an encouraging experience to share the same thoughts and concerns with foreign nursing students on such issues as global nursing shortage.

Poster Exhibition

JNA exhibited a poster at the ICN Congress entitled "The Guideline of Infection Control of JNA: Making and Spreading” that concluded that development of nursing human resources for infection management, development of a management guideline, organization of workshops and adequate responses based on the guideline to inquiries are necessary to conduct infection management effectively. "A Study on Assessment of the ‘Perioperative Nursing’ Workshop Conducted in Mongolia” was a collaborative poster presentation by and Mongolia Nurses Association and JNA, which reported the outcome of the workshop held in 2004 as a part of the collaborative projects by the two associations.

Booth Exhibition

JNA presented a booth exhibition which was designed in an image of a sushi service counter with Japanese style store curtain. The booth was also furnished with tatami(straw) mat which was modeled on a Japanese tea ceremony room. JNA staffs in kimono dealt with visitors and disseminated pamphlets introducing nursing in Japan and flyers about 2007 CNR and ICN Conference in Yokohama, Japan. The booth was quite popular among the Congress participants and its purpose of conducting public relations on culture and nursing in Japan and activities by JNA.

JNA Support for Congress Participation of NNA Representatives

JNA offered financial support to 32 NNA Representatives from 30 countries to participate to the Congress.

2007 CNR and ICN Conference to be held in Yokohama, Japan

At the closing of the CNR, Dr. Minami, JNA President at the time, and Ms. Masako Maeda, Deputy Mayor of the City of Yokohama announced that JNA will co-host the 2007 CNR and ICN Conference in Yokohama, Japan. The announcement was also made by Dr. Okaya, JNA Executive Director, at the closing ceremony of the Congress. JNA also presented DVD images of Yokohama as well as Japan for promotion and appealed a reunion in Yokohama in 2007.
JNA Visits to Assess Damages by Sumatra Earthquake and Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster

The earthquake and tsunami disaster that attacked Southern Asia in December, 2004 allegedly caused damages to more than 20 countries and death of more than 275,000 people. JNA conducted site-visits to assess damages in Indonesia, Thailand and Sri Lanka. JNA dispatched total of 13 delegates in three groups that visited each country respectively in February and March. Each group collected information about damages through visiting Ministry of Health, Japanese Embassy, evacuation centers, clinics and hospital dormitory for nurses. The delegates also exchanged ideas with representatives of the nursing associations regarding how JNA could support the associations in the damaged areas. A debriefing session was held at JNA on April 24th to report the assessment and to discuss about mid- and long-term supporting means for the nursing associations. JNA solicited financial contributions from the members for the nursing associations of Indonesia, Thailand and Sri Lanka. Support programs, which include organizing workshops on disaster nursing as well as providing financial assists for constructing an association office and for distributing nurses’ uniforms, have been planned.

Nursing Forum held on Nursing Day

Nursing Forum was held on May 8th in Tokyo to celebrate the 15th Anniversary of the establishment of the Nursing Day. Participants, many of them in teens, enjoyed talk shows, stand-up comedies on nursing topics and live concerts.

JNA Responds to Mongolian Nurses Association Request for Nursing Policy Development

Mongolian Nurses Association (MNA), whose Partnership Project with JNA is now in its third year, has been developing steadily under a strong leadership of nursing professionals who completed the WPRO/ICN Leadership for Change Program in 2004. In response to the request from MNA Board who visited JNA for the workshop in February, 2005, JNA dispatched a lecturer to Mongolia in June for the Nursing Policy Development Symposium held in preparation for the States Level Meeting for First Nursing Policy Development in Mongolia 2004-2008. In the Symposium held on June 10, Minister, State Secretary and Executive Officers of the Ministry of Health, National Hospital Administrators, Nursing College Presidents, local staffs of WHO and NGO who were invited to the symposium had a heated debate over policy planning that will solve the current national health issues. Currently, preparation for implementing the nursing policy has been well developed. JNA has focused on the empowerment of the organizational strength of MNA and on supporting its Continuing Educational Program. One of JNA’s contributions for the empowerment was to donate ICN Mobile Library. JNA has also planned the Second State Seminar on Nursing for the Elderly, Nursing Textbook Development, and the Third Workshop for MNA Delegates in Japan to be carried out in February, 2006.

Dr. Hiroko Minami Visits SANNAM in South Africa

Dr. Minami gave a lecture on disaster nursing at a SANNAM (SADC AIDS Network of Nurses and Midwives) headquarters in Pretoria, SA, where she visited from March 13th to 15th. Dr. Minami, now ICN President, was JNA President at the time of the visit. Dr. Minami presented her view of regarding HIV/AIDS as one sort of disaster to 25 participants who are nursing leaders, nursing association presidents and board members from 12 SANNAM affiliated countries. Her view roused interests among the audience and the session provided a fruitful opportunity to exchange information and ideas on HIV/AIDS and other challenging issues.

JNA submitted Position Documents to MHLW

Among the two Position Documents submitted to MHLW by JNA, one is regarding the interpretation of the Article 17 of the Medical Law and Article 31 of the Nursing Act which both refers to acts that are not considered “medical” from a commonsense standpoint such as cutting nails of the elderly patient in nursing homes. In the document submitted on April 28th, JNA expressed its apprehension that the extended interpretation of the articles may cause inappropriate care for the patients by caregivers who are not licensed MDs or nurses. The other document submitted on May 13th, JNA presented six suggestions regarding the review for the health delivery system. The suggestions include support for the nation and patients in making health delivery choices, comprehensive promotion for health service safety measures, development of emergency health service delivery system, task sharing and networking among health professions, promotion of home care and improvement in nursing care and education.