

## JNA News Release Vol.47 Japanese Nursing Association

### Efforts to achieve UHC with the power of nursing

Achieving the health goals of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be discussed at a plenary session of the ICN 2025 Congress in Helsinki. One of the speakers will be Dr. Masami Sakoi, Vice-Minister for Health, Chief Medical and Global Health Officer (the highest post of medical officials), Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan, expected to share the experience of UHC in Japan with nurses around the world.

Japan is recognized as a country that achieved UHC at a relatively early stage. In 1961, Japan established a universal health insurance system that guarantees free access to healthcare facilities where patients can choose facilities and receive care when they need it.

As healthcare professionals who work most closely with people, nurses practice in a variety of settings, including local government, communities, home care, midwifery homes, industry, and health and long-term care facilities. They have contributed to sustaining and expanding UHC in Japan through their efforts in the provision of health care, including disease prevention and health promotion. Last year, The Lancet also highlighted the contributions of public health nurses in Japan.

Japanese Nursing Association (JNA) has been disseminating information and sharing the experiences of nurses in Japan through its website. “*Nursing in Japan*<sup>1</sup>”, published by JNA, provides an overview of the social security system and introduces UHC in Japan. Additionally, in September 2024, JNA submitted a letter of request to then Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare to assign nurses to share nursing knowledge at the UHC Knowledge Hub<sup>2</sup>, which is expected to be established in the Tokyo area in 2025.

Prof. Megumi Teshima, a strategic advisor to JNA, joined the submission of the above request. As an ICN Board member, she called for investment in nursing and presentation of a vision that nursing supports UHC, in order to achieve UHC. She also emphasizes that it is important to communicate the nursing experience from nurses, as well as the importance of nursing from an international standpoint. She also stresses the need for the nursing community to take action in solidarity in collaboration with the ICN.

JNA will continue its efforts in collaboration with relevant stakeholders to effectively communicate the important role of nursing in UHC to policymakers at various levels and from different perspectives.

1 Japanese Nursing Association (2023). Nursing in Japan. <https://www.nurse.or.jp/english/nursing/>

2 In 2024, the Government of Japan announced the establishment of the UHC Knowledge Hub in the Tokyo area in 2025. See JNA News Release Vol. 44 for details. [https://www.nurse.or.jp/english/assets/JNA\\_News\\_Release\\_Vol.44.pdf](https://www.nurse.or.jp/english/assets/JNA_News_Release_Vol.44.pdf)

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