

JNA News Release

Japanese Nursing Association

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<http://www.nurse.or.jp/jna/english/index.html>

JNA receives 2012 Prime Minister's Commendation to contributors for disaster prevention

In recognition of its efforts following the Great East Japan Earthquake, including the dispatch of disaster relief nurses, JNA was named a recipient of the 2012 Prime Minister's Commendation to contributors for disaster prevention. This award is presented to individuals and groups who have made outstanding achievements in contribution to disaster prevention activities at the disaster sites. In a social gathering

after the awards ceremony, then -Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare Yoko Komiyama told JNA's Executive Director Kumiko Ii, "We are grateful that you dispatched nurses to the areas hit by the disaster, and we are counting on nurses to play an active role in rebuilding the lives of communities and enhancing their medical care."

Disaster Relief Nurses

Disaster relief nurses undergo training and practice to enable them to provide disaster evacuees with suitable medical and nursing care to maintain their health, and nursing professionals affected by the disaster with support to alleviate their physical and mental burdens. There are presently 7,378 disaster relief nurses registered with the 47 prefectural nursing associations (as of June 2012).

JNA's efforts in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake are described on its official website:

<http://www.nurse.or.jp/jna/english/> .

JNA activity report on the Great East Japan Earthquake in Japanese is now on the JNA website <http://www.nurse.or.jp/home/saigai/hokoku/index.html> .

A summary of the report in English will be up on the JNA 's English website soon.



Disaster Nursing Supervisors Conference held

In August, JNA held a conference for the persons in charge of disaster nursing at the prefectural nursing associations. This conference held annually since 2004, it seeks to augment and extend nursing relief activities during disasters.

JNA President Suga Sakamoto stated in her opening address: "Ideally, disaster nursing would be

incorporated into basic nursing education and continuing education so that all nurses would be capable of disaster relief." Executive Director Kumiko Ii then asked for participants' cooperation in continuing assistance to areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake and securing the number of nursing personnel needed.

Data released by the government make it clear that Tokyo, home to JNA's headquarters, could very likely suffer a large-scale disaster from an earthquake subsequent to the Great East Japan Earthquake. Indeed, if the damage due to torrential rains and other causes are included, a disaster could well strike at any time and any place in Japan. In light of this, the conference examined basic principles for disaster relief activities and the registration of disaster relief nurses.

Following this conference, JNA and prefectural nursing associations at the end of September

conducted a joint exercise in coordinating the dispatch of disaster relief nurses in order to confirm procedures and identify issues to be addressed in future. This is the simulation under hypothetical disaster required JNA and prefectural nursing associations to establish contact and coordinate the dispatch of disaster relief nurses. Some of the participants commented that previous joint exercises had proven useful in coordinating the dispatch of disaster relief nurses in the wake of last year's Great East Japan Earthquake, reaffirming the need for such training. ■

Disaster Prevention Day – September 1

Japan established September 1 as Disaster Prevention Day in 1960.

September 1 was the date on which the magnitude 7.9 Great Kanto Earthquake struck the Tokyo metropolitan area in 1923, resulting in more than 100,000 persons killed or missing, and this date also falls during the peak of the annual typhoon season. Following Typhoon Vera, Japan's most devastating post-war typhoon (4,700 dead, 401 missing), September 1 was originally designated in 1959 as a day to encourage people to make preparations against earthquakes, windstorms, and flooding. The week including September 1 has now been labeled Disaster Prevention Week, and features disaster prevention events and exercises designed to boost public awareness of disaster prevention.

Source: Tokyo Fire Department (http://www.tfd.metro.tokyo.jp/libr/qa/qa_59.htm)

International Public Health Nursing Network Pre-conference

From August 27 to 29, JNA hosted a three-day conference aimed at developing an international network for public health nursing. Symposiums were held on the first and final days for exchanging views on public health nurses' activities in the UK, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Japan. On the second day, overseas participants and public health nursing specialists from Japan visited Miyagi Prefecture, one of the areas hardest hit by the Great East Japan Earthquake, where they received briefings on the activities of local public health nurses from the day of the disaster to the present and toured affected areas and temporary housing units.



Affected Public Health Nurses in Yamamoto town with the participants at community support center built with temporary housing in Yamamoto town, Miyagi.

The participants from abroad showed great interest in the reports on the activities of local public health nurses who, acquainted with conditions on the ground, were able despite being disaster victims themselves to support fellow residents with the mutual assistance of colleagues; these explanations offered the participants opportunities to gain insight into the true nature of public health

nursing and to share valuable information on the roles and best practices of public health nursing worldwide. This three-day program also gave participants a renewed sense of the need for an international public health nursing network, and discussions focused on constructing such a network in future. ■

Nursing in Japan

Q What competencies are required of disaster relief nurses?

- **Competencies required of nursing professionals engaged in relief activities**

The following competencies are particularly necessary for emergency relief activities:

1. Judgment, 2. Ability to take action, 3. Ability to get things done, 4. Leadership, 5. Ability to adapt to sudden changes in circumstances, 6. Ability to coordinate human relations, 7. Cooperativeness, 8. Independence

- **Years of experience required**

Nurses must be able to perform a full range of general nursing practices, so at least 3-5 years of experience is usually required.

- **Areas of nursing specialty**

The areas of specialty of the nursing professionals engaged in relief activities play an important part in on-site activities. There is not enough time, manpower or space during emergencies to provide adequate orientations or engage in preliminary discussions, and nurses must immediately set to work. As nursing needs will likely to change over the course of a disaster, nursing professionals will be selected based on the areas of specialty needed at particular times.

[Nursing specialty needs over the course of a disaster]

Post-disaster time frame	Nursing/relief needs
Disaster – initial reaction (First 3 days after disaster)	Emergency care nursing, Triage Operating theatre nursing, Dialysis nursing, Surgical nursing Emergency nursing management
Initial reaction – short-term response (3 days – 2 weeks after disaster)	Medical nursing, Chronic diseases nursing Surgical nursing
Medium-term response (Several weeks – 3 months after disaster)	Mental health and psychiatric nursing Community nursing Nursing professionals knowledgeable on social resources and capable of utilizing them All-around nursing skills across a variety of nursing specialties
Long-term response (More than 3 months after disaster)	Community nursing, Mental health and psychiatric nursing (dealing with alcohol dependency, etc.)

● Physical and mental fitness

Relief efforts during emergencies place significant stress on care providers, making physical and mental fitness a prerequisite. Nurses must be confident in their physical and mental fortitude.



Logo mark for Disaster relief nurses



Above: checking evacuee's blood pressure
Left: break time with supply

News Topics in Japan

Website dedicated to “quality of employment” launched

On September 6, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare has launched a website dedicated to the “quality of employment” of nurses and other health care professionals. Numerous efforts have been pursued on the basis of a June 2011 report by a Ministry project team on improving the “quality of employment” of nurses, etc. Some of the efforts being made to improve the working environments at health care institutions are described at this website.

Efforts made to improve the employment environment in health care settings

On September 25, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) announced that it would be bolstering efforts to improve the employment environment in health care settings for nurses, physicians and other health care professionals. “The Project team for Improving the Quality of Jobs in Health” organized within the Ministry will study ideas to promote a diversity of work patterns, support systems for rehiring unemployed nurses, etc. The Project Team will not be vertically -structured, but instead will comprise personnel from various bureaus across the MHLW.