

May 13, 2020

Letter to the Members of the Japanese Association for Acute Medicine – Part II

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Chairperson, Board of Directors
Japanese Association for Acute Medicine

I wish to appreciate your daily contribution to the fight against COVID-19 in these difficult circumstances.

One month has passed since the chairperson of the Japanese Association for Acute Medicine (JAAM) and the president of the Japanese Society for Emergency Medicine (JSEM) jointly issued their statement. On May 4, the state of emergency declaration was extended to May 31 across Japan. Although the number of new COVID-19 cases has declined, the medical system still faces many challenges. The shortage of personal protective equipment (particularly N95 masks) still persists and the problems associated with PCR testing, the work environment of healthcare providers, fatigue, and stress among healthcare professionals remain unsolved.

It is likely that the fight against COVID-19 will continue for more than a year. It is indicated that we need to continuously address this disease even after the pandemic. We are transitioning from the difficult time with the rapid increase in patients to enter a new stage. While the state of emergency declaration is expected to be lifted in some areas, I think that it is about time to review the emergency medical system and to prepare it for the second and third outbreaks of COVID-19.

Previously, we posted the reports of Dr. Yuko Nakajima (Emory University), Dr. Seikei Hibino (University of Minnesota), and Dr. Tatsuya Norii (University of New Mexico) on the JAAM's website. These reports make us understand that the situation in the United States varies depending on the region and is changing each day. We can learn from the situation in the United States, where healthcare professionals are starting new efforts in preparation for the next stage, after having passed through the hard time when healthcare professionals were overwhelmed by the surge of patients.

We summarized the results of the questionnaire survey that we asked you to answer. The summary has been sent to the JAAM members via email and has also been posted on the JAAM's webpage. Compared to the previous survey, more responders requested to address the shortage of personal protective equipment, problems with local medical systems, and the unavailability of PCR testing. Based on the responses and opinions given in the questionnaire, we created a diagram showing the COVID-19-associated factors of burden on medical facilities. If you have any opinion or request regarding COVID-19, please contact us at any time.

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As mentioned in the statement dated on April 9, I would like to share with you again our stance that we cooperate with all of the people engaged in emergency medicine and the community to fight against COVID-19, maintain the emergency medical system, and protect the lives of people amid the changing social and medical circumstances.

Finally, we ask you to adequately take care of your health and those of the people around you.