Greetings from the President

Launched in April 2015, the Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED) pursues its assigned mission to fast-track medical research and development in support of humanity. Fast-tracking medical research and development entails overcoming the numerous cultural differences and obstacles posed by different communities and requires efforts on the part of physicians, medical support staff, basic and clinical researchers, pharmaceutical industries, and even patients and their family members. To this end, AMED supports both basic and clinical research, focusing on three different aspects of life: the life sciences, daily life, and quality of life. AMED is currently tackling the challenge of reforming Japan’s funding allocation and evaluation systems. Other significant tasks in fast-tracking the social implementation of research outcomes include global collaboration and data sharing, activities essential to implementing infectious disease surveillance, rapid diagnosis of rare and undiagnosed diseases, and novel therapeutic interventions for patients. Japan has a responsibility to accelerate multidisciplinary medical research and to develop therapies and sociomedical ecosystems to overcome common diseases such as cancer and dementia. AMED empowers such activities.

Directors (as of April 1, 2015)

President
Makoto Suematsu

Executive Director
Yasuo Otani

Auditor
Shingo Majima

Auditor
Kimiko Murofushi

History

February 2013 Cabinet Secretariat, Office of Healthcare Policy established.
June 2013 Cabinet approves establishment of “control tower” function for medical R&D, in line with “Japan Revitalization Strategy -- Japan is Back” policy strategy.
July 2014 Cabinet approves Healthcare Policy.
April 2015 Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED) established.

About AMED

The Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED) engages in research and development in the field of medicine, establishing and maintaining an environment for this R&D, and providing funding, in order to promote integrated medical R&D from basic research to practical applications, to smoothly achieve application of outcomes, and to achieve comprehensive and effective establishment / maintenance of an environment for medical R&D.

The Role of AMED

Providing a one-stop service for research expenses, AMED consolidates budgets for research expenses, which had previously been allocated from different sources -- the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. In addition to making possible an integrated approach to providing research funding and establishing / maintaining research environments, the unification of points of contact and procedures for research expenses can be expected to reduce the administrative burden on institutions and researchers receiving allocations for research expenses. AMED aims to achieve the world’s highest level of medical care / service and to form a society in which people live long, healthy lives by promoting integrated research and development, from basic research to practical application, and by establishing and maintaining an environment therefor, and linking this to various forms of growth in medical R&D.

AMED Operations

(1) Engaging in medical R&D and establishment / maintenance of medical research environment
(2) Promotion of the widespread adoption / practical utilization of outcomes related to (1)
(3) Provision of subsidies for medical R&D and establishment / maintenance of research environment
(4) Operations incidental to (1) through (3)

New System for Medical R&D

Headquarters for Healthcare Policy (HHP)
- develop a comprehensive plan for the promotion of medical R&D
- integrate medical R&D budget requests of relevant ministries
- make strategic decisions on the allocation of promotional adjustment funds

Advises on Nomination of President and Auditor
Advises on Mid-to-Long Term Targets
Comprehensive adjustment of budget request

Ministries
- Cabinet Secretariat, Office of Healthcare Policy
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
- Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare
- Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry

Handle Nomination and Dismissal of AMED President and Auditor
Present Mid-to-Long Term Targets
Allocate Subsidy Operating Expenses

Institutes/Researchers
- Provides a unified point of contact for funding and for application procedures.
- Provides support from basic research to practical use.
Grant Programs

Based on the Plan for Promotion of Medical Research and Development prescribed by the government of Japan, AMED promotes integrated R&D in the field of medicine, from basic research to clinical trials, focusing on nine interrelated areas including regenerative medicine and oncology. In addition to ensuring that outcomes are linked through to practical application, it undertakes projects with the aim of comprehensively and effectively establishing and maintaining an environment for this R&D. These projects are conducted on the basis of wide-ranging invitations for proposals from researchers at universities, research institutes, and corporations, as well as from institutions. Proposals received are evaluated appropriately, selecting projects and the researchers to implement them. In order to maximize research outcomes, AMED provides a variety of support, including initiatives for the prevention of research misconduct in order to ensure proper research, support for research institutes working to secure intellectual property, support for corporate alliances targeting practical application, and support for international joint research.

Management and Evaluation Framework

AMED assigns program directors (PD), program supervisors (PS), and program officers (PO) who have top-class academic backgrounds and R&D achievements in the appropriate field of research, and are knowledgeable concerning the evaluation of R&D topics and operation of R&D projects. PDs, PSs, and POs work together to gain an understanding of research topics in all interrelated areas. They provide sophisticated expert coordination for program operation in the interrelated areas for which they are responsible and promote cooperation between interrelated areas. They also evaluate and discover excellent R&D proposals, and provide integrated management of the program so that basic research outcomes are linked through to clinical research and practical application.

Current Projects with Corresponding Divisions at AMED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Division</th>
<th>JFY2016 budget</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Project for Drug Discovery and Development</td>
<td>Division of Drug Research</td>
<td></td>
<td>21.5 B Yen</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Project for Medical Device Development</td>
<td>Division of Innovative Drug Discovery and Development</td>
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<td>14.6 B Yen</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Project for Japan Translational and Clinical Research Core Centers</td>
<td>Division of Clinical Research and Trials</td>
<td></td>
<td>9.8 B Yen</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Japan Regenerative Medicine Project</td>
<td>Division of Regenerative Medicine Research</td>
<td></td>
<td>14.8 B Yen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Japan Genomic Medicine Project</td>
<td>Office of Regulatory Science and Clinical Research Support</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.9 B Yen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Japan Cancer Research Project</td>
<td>Division of Research Infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.7 B Yen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Project for Psychiatric and Neurological Disorders</td>
<td>Division of Cancer Research</td>
<td></td>
<td>9.6 B Yen</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Emerging /Re-emerging Infectious Disease Project of Japan</td>
<td>Division of Neurological, Psychiatric and Brain Research</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.6 B Yen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Rare/Intractable Disease Project of Japan</td>
<td>Division of Infectious Disease Research</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.2 B Yen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Other Projects</td>
<td>Division of Rare / Intractable Disease Research</td>
<td></td>
<td>26.8 B Yen</td>
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</table>

* There are some overlapping parts on the amount of the above project budgets.
International Activities

With international collaboration growing ever more important, AMED is seeking to reinforce the global collaborative network.

1) International cooperative research projects conducted by scientists

AMED funds several international research programs, as well as bilateral and multilateral efforts, including the US-Japan Cooperative Medical Sciences Program, SICORP (Strategic International Collaborative Research Program), e-ASIA JRP, and SATREPS (Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development). SATREPS is a unique program that addresses global health issues based on the needs of partner countries via ODA. Global health issues and NTDs (neglected tropical diseases) are also among its targets.

2) Joint seminars, symposia and other scientific meetings

AMED holds joint meetings with foreign funding agencies and institutions to identify potential collaborative research partnerships and to foster relationships between meeting participants to further the development of collaborative research.

Group photo at scientific workshop for e-ASIA Joint Research Program co-hosted by AMED, NIAID and NGO, in Myanmar, 2019.

3) Personnel exchange – invitations and training

4) Other cooperative activities

International Collaboration of AMED

Topics

AMED signs research collaboration memorandum with US National Institute of Health

On January 12, 2016 JST (January 11 EST), the Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED) signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Washington D.C. The agreement covers cooperative research projects, joint seminars, symposia and other scientific meetings, and the exchange of personnel and researchers. AMED expects the agreement to lead to collaboration in areas such as research into rare and undiagnosed diseases.

Signing ceremony: NIH Director Francis S. Collins (left) and AMED President Makoto Suematsu (right) signed the Memorandum.

Establishing Overseas Offices

AMED plans to establish three overseas offices in FY 2016: in Washington, D.C. (US), London (UK), and Singapore. The three offices will serve as hubs to promote and organize cooperative research projects with overseas governmental organizations, funding agencies, and research institutes.

Initiative on Rare and Undiagnosed Diseases (IRUD)

Rare diseases are often difficult to diagnose. In many cases, a definitive diagnosis requires a series of tests, expert consultation, and search for comparable cases. With this in mind, AMED has launched the Initiative on Rare and Undiagnosed Diseases (IRUD), through which it seeks to foster collaborative efforts among research institutions, hospitals, community clinics, and all the medical experts therein. IRUD also works with global counterparts, such as the NIH Undiagnosed Diseases Network (UDN), to share potential benefits for patients who remain undiagnosed for many years.

IRUD will be strategically linked to current and future AMED activities. Those include the participation of AMED in the International Rare Diseases Research Consortium (IRDiRC) since July 2015.

For the latest updates, visit http://www.amed.go.jp/en/program/IRUD/.

Response to Infectious Diseases and Antimicrobial Resistance

To respond in a timely manner to outbreaks of infectious disease and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in cooperation with overseas research organizations, AMED joined the Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness (GLOPID-R) in August 2015 and the Joint Programming Initiative on Antimicrobial Resistance (JPIAMR) in October 2015. The Japanese government is currently developing an action plan regarding antimicrobial resistance that warrants global action, and AMED is expanding and improving its support for related research accordingly. AMED has helped develop antimicrobial treatments and establish GenEpid, a genome database for drug resistance bacteria, as well as the Japan Nosocomial Infections Surveillance (JANIS) program. AMED shares information and works with organizations around the world to enable prompt, effective countermeasures to outbreaks of infectious disease in cooperation with the above-mentioned networks.

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