

## Urgent request for medical care and support for victims of Noto Peninsula Earthquake

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Mr. Kishida Fumio, Prime Minister

Mr. Keizo Takemi, Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare

Tsuyoshi Masuda

President, Japan Federation of Democratic Medical Institutions

We would like to express our respect for your efforts in response to the tremendous damage caused by the Noto Peninsula Earthquake.

The earthquake, which measured 7 on Japan's seismic intensity scale on January 1, caused the collapse of many houses, tsunami, and large-scale fires. With utilities cut off and cold waves sweeping through the area, many victims are living in extremely harsh conditions. Securing a medical delivery system and providing material and human support to protect the lives and health of disaster victims are urgent tasks.

We urgently request the following and ask for your immediate response:

1. Guarantee the right to receive medical and nursing care services to all disaster victims.
  - (1) The government should be responsible for exempting patients from paying fees, including for meals during hospitalization, regardless of whether they have a health insurance card and insured status or not.
  - (2) When reissuing health insurance cards, it should issue regular cards to all victims instead of short-term insurance cards or certificates of eligibility.
  - (3) To the uninsured, it should issue national health insurance cards.
  
2. Provide support for medical institutions in disaster-affected areas to resume and continue medical treatment.
  - (1) The government should supply and secure goods necessary for providing medical services, such as medicines, equipment, and food, to medical institutions in affected areas.
  - (2) For medical institutions with disrupted essential utilities to resume and continue medical services, it should provide them with in-house power generation, water, and fuel as well as make every effort to restore utilities.
  
3. Take into consideration the health, privacy, and other human rights of victims in immediately setting up, operating, and improving the environment of evacuation centers.

- (1) The government should inspect shelters to grasp how poor their conditions are.
- (2) It should take thorough measures to prevent the spread of infections as much as possible.
- (3) It should install separate toilets for men and women, western-style toilets that can be used by the elderly, and toilets for people with disabilities.
- (4) It should ensure privacy through partitions and other means as well as improve environments in consideration of women and children, such as setting up nursing rooms and women's changing rooms.
- (5) It should secure and provide cardboard beds for shelters where they are in short supply.
- (6) It should listen to the voices of victims living in shelters and provide them with clothes, underwear, socks, and other items that are in short supply.

4. Guarantee housing, a basic human right, to all victims who lost their homes in the earthquake.

- (1) The government should cover the cost of temporary housing for all victims who wish to move into it.
- (2) It should build permanent housing so that disaster victims can live in temporary housing for as short as possible as well as create a safe living environment for all.

5. Swiftly provide financial support for the restoration and reconstruction of disaster-hit medical and welfare facilities in order to protect the lives and health of residents affected by the disaster.

- (1) The government should expand eligibility for disaster recovery subsidies to all private medical institutions and drastically increase the percentage of the subsidies.
- (2) It should make the medical loan program for disaster recovery interest-free for the entire term and significantly increase the loan limit.

6. Immediately identify vulnerable victims (disabled, elderly, children, etc.) who are unable to go to evacuation centers and provide them with necessary assistance.