

Three Actions Required to Improve the Quality of Medical Care/Welfare While Achieving Economic Growth (Summary)

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In order for Japan to regain the momentum for economic growth, it is essential to strengthen the service industry, which accounts for more than 70% of gross domestic product (GDP), and to enhance its productivity. Since it is certain that the demand for medical care and welfare services in particular will increase and generate employment in Japan as our society is aging at an accelerated pace, it is crucial to give a spur to these services and enhance their productivity. With this as a background, we would like to propose three actions required to improve the quality of medical care and welfare while achieving economic growth as below.

Action 1

Promote the collection and utilization of medical data (outcomes, etc.), as well as enhance quality and innovation in medical care.

Step 1: The government should present a future vision and support the initiatives being conducted by various organizations.

- The government should present a vision for the development of a medical database—one equivalent to the Registry databases used in the U.S. and Europe—which will meet the needs of Japan.
- The government should support academic societies, solve problems associated with the handling of personal information, and develop basic rules for the utilization of medical data for innovation.
- The government should utilize the existing initiatives being conducted by various organizations to build medical databases, and pave the way for their integrated operation.
- The government should develop a highly useful database of the Diagnosis Procedure Combination (DPC) data.

Step 2: While introducing the common identification number system for both the social security and tax systems in 2015, the government should also work to establish Personal Health Records for practical use.

Action 2

Provide more effective incentives for medical care and nursing care service providers to improve their productivity and service quality.

- Hospitals supported by the central and local governments should disclose their management data (profit and loss statements, balance sheets) as well as medical data that can be used for hospital accreditation and other evaluations.
- Hospitals operated by administrative agencies should utilize the revised Act on Promotion of Private Finance Initiative (PFI) to outsource their management to private entities, and encourage role differentiation and collaboration between hospitals in each medical service area.
- Nursing care service providers should utilize public-private investment funds to share best practices and strengthen their governance.

Action 3

Support export of Japan's health care system and expand into overseas markets.

- The government should work to increase awareness of the high standard of Japan's health care system in overseas markets, and increase "branding" for the system to boost its value.
- The government should support the establishment of a consortium comprising medical care and nursing care service providers, medical equipment manufacturers, financial institutions, trading houses, and other organizations to promote the export of Japan's health care system.

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