Symposium 1–3

Ideas for an Engaging and Appealing Society

Atsushi TAKEDA
Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Tokyo Health Sciences

I have been involved with the Japanese Society of Balneology, Climatology and Physical Medicine for many years. During that time I have participated in a variety of Society activities, including submitting papers and presenting at conferences. I would like to use this opportunity to express my hopes for the Society as it moves forward.

First, it can be said that — regardless of one’s personal preferences — the core mission of the Society is the publication of papers (the Journal) and the presentation of research. The Society should make its primary focus the development of these activities, since development in this field reflects on the Society. Research methods and content in modern times have become more complex and specialized, making it increasingly difficult to perform basic or clinical research as performed in the recent past: during spare moments away from clinical practice. Furthermore, young researchers in particular do not find it easy to participate in the Society. This background makes it difficult to optimistically consider pursuing collaborations with other academic societies in order to increase the number of Society participants and promote the development of academic research; however, witnessing three circulatory system related societies engage in a well received collaborative venture made me consider some possibilities. Perhaps hosting a collaborative event once every few years might be a positive stimulus for the Society, and, moreover, something that may be necessary. At the very least, in order to foster an international presence, I believe the Society must actively pursue communication and formal agreements with similar academic societies outside Japan, especially those in Europe and the Americas. The international community recognizes that medicine in Japan advances constantly and that Japan has world-class technology. These reasons produce hope for participation from overseas, despite existing issues with the global economy.

Second, the issue of “medical specialists” is important. Various medical specialties are not currently recognized as official qualifications. As a result, this system is not well established in society at large. Moving forward, improvements to the system for medical specialists will be performed primarily by the Japanese Medical Specialty Board, which is responsible for developing the system. However, the Society must seek to make more substantial the precise nature of its system of “Ryouhoui (authorized balneotherapeutic doctors)” and “board certified balneologists”.

I would like to make detailed proposals on the above two points at the Symposium. I genuinely hope that this Society will develop to become even more engaging and appealing. I also hope to continue to support Society activities that make it possible for a meaningful fellowship between members. I look forward to hearing directly from individual members at the Symposium.