

THE JAPAN EPILEPSY SOCIETY

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Japanese Declaration on Epilepsy September 30, 2013

Epilepsy is a well-known disease from ancient times, however people with epilepsy have many problems in their lives even today. Japan Epilepsy Association and Japan Epilepsy Society have been working together to get over these problems over the years. To encourage close liaison, there have been joint meetings from 2010. At the 8th joint meeting on September 1, 2013, the following Declaration on Epilepsy was adopted.

We declare every October to be a special month to focus on epilepsy in Japan.

We proclaim all people related to health care, organizations and policymakers the followings in order to solve global issues surrounding epilepsy:

- To place epilepsy on a top priority in medical policy.
- To establish a medical system for epilepsy and assure that people with epilepsy have access to modern and proper medical and health care.
- To promote social integration and eliminate discrimination against epilepsy in all spheres of life, especially work, school and mobility.
- To encourage educational activities for all people to understand epilepsy and thereby reduce stigma and prejudice.
- To provide experts and volunteers in the field of health care, education, and employment with appropriate training about epilepsy.
- To introduce appropriate legislation to protect the rights of all people with epilepsy.

To support and promote basic, clinical, psychological and social research on epilepsy in all areas including medicine, education, health and welfare, and employment.

Additional statements for a proper understanding of epilepsy:

- Epilepsy is one of the most common brain disorders, estimated to affect one million people, and 50 thousand people are diagnosed with epilepsy annually in Japan.
- Epilepsy occurs in all ages irrespective of gender. Especially infants and the elderly have a highest incidence.
- Since epilepsy is a chronic disease, it requires a long-term treatment and care.
- The prognosis of epilepsy varies: from seizure freedom to therapy resistance, with or without comorbidities.
- Although 70 to 80% of people with epilepsy could be seizure-free with appropriate treatment, many people do not receive such treatment due to inadequate medical system.

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- Epilepsy can have serious physical, psychological, social and economical consequences for the afflicted and their families, but adequate countermeasures against such consequences are largely lacking:
 - Physical consequence includes risk of injury, fracture, and death.
 - Psychological consequence results from fear of seizure, lack of understanding and stigma of epilepsy.
 - Social consequence includes discriminations and restrictions in mobility, education, employment, and legal system.
 - Economical consequence includes financial burden on the patients, medical economy, and economic loss due to low employment.
- Optimal medical system, health care education and enlightenment activities may reduce the cost of epilepsy treatment.
- Research funding for prevention, diagnosis, treatment and psychosocial care of epilepsy is insufficient.

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